Saturday Review

JULY 1981 $1.50

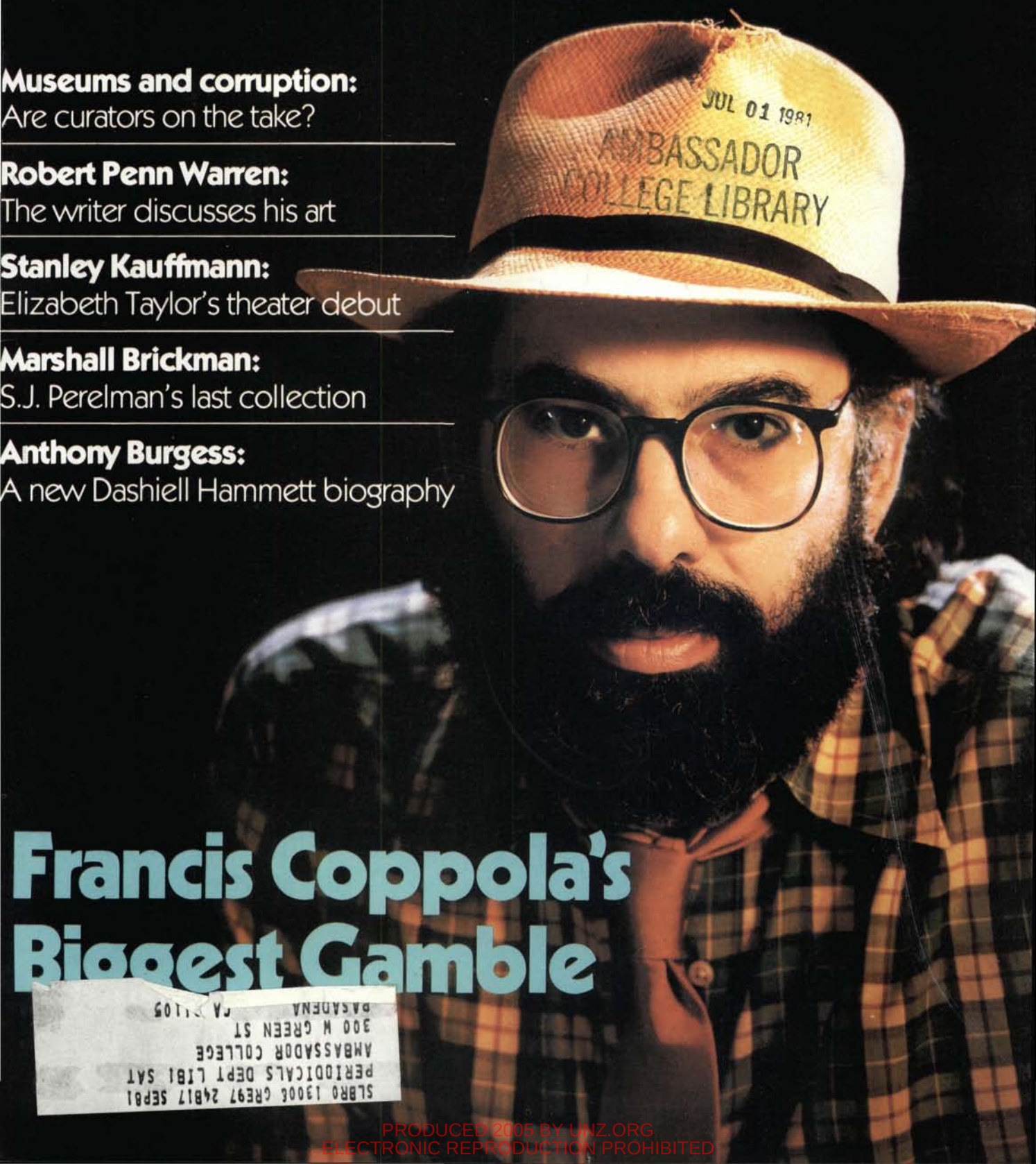
Museums and corruption:
Are curators on the take?

Robert Penn Warren:
The writer discusses his art

Stanley Kauffmann:
Elizabeth Taylor's theater debut

Marshall Brickman:
S.J. Perelman's last collection

Anthony Burgess:
A new Dashiell Hammett biography



Francis Coppola's Biggest Gamble

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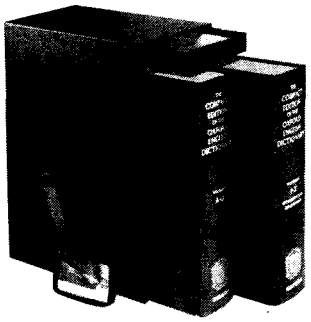

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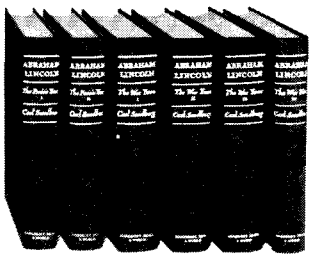

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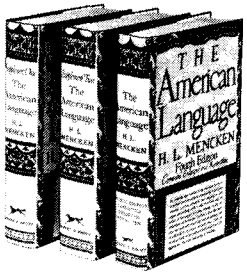

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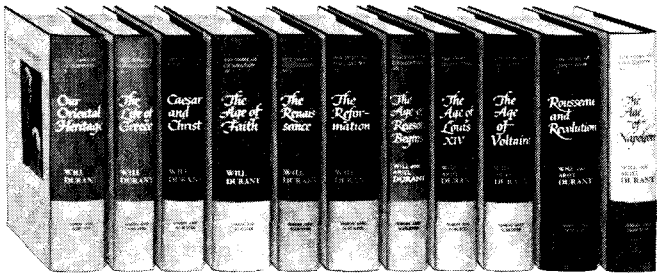

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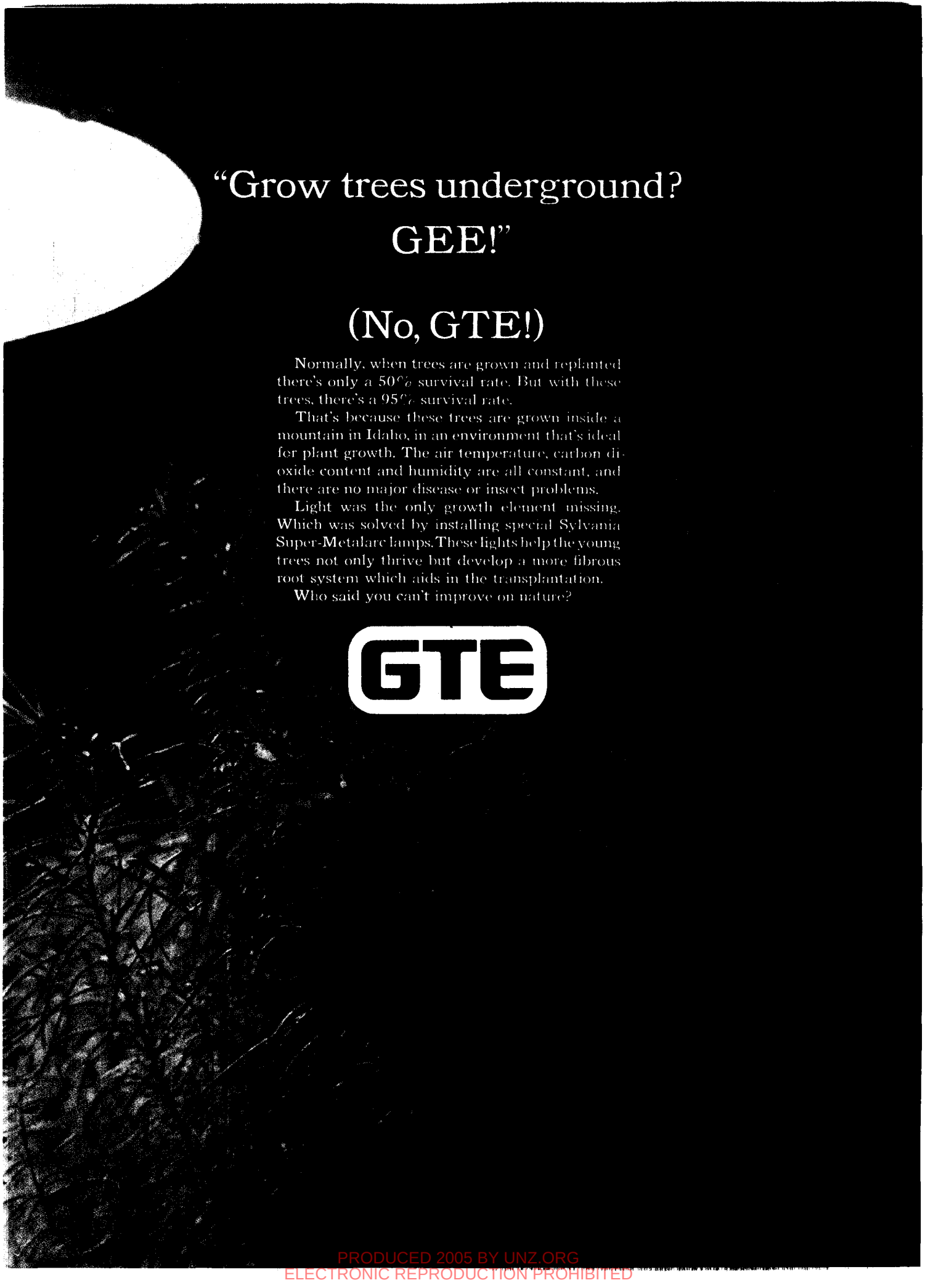

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Saturday Review® JULY 1981

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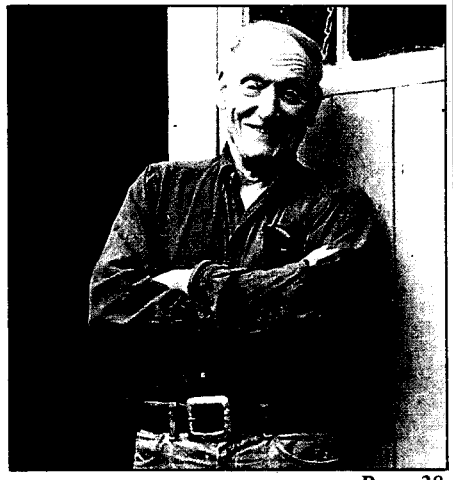

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THAT'S SHOW BIZ

"TV news, no matter how lofty its pronounced aims, is rarely able to escape the clutches of show business considerations."

–TV critic John J. O'Connor
(The New York Times; April 4, 1975)

Whether the presentation of news on television is more show business than journalism is being hotly debated. Journalists themselves seem uncertain of the answer; it's a touchy and sensitive issue with most of them. We think their concern is well-founded.

As an oil company, we're part of one of the most complex industries on earth. Questions involving science, economics, politics, and law are natural features of our terrain. We deal with facts, not appearances. Show business is just the opposite—and whenever it encounters energy issues, it is usually the facts that suffer.

Reporting on energy requires thorough investigation and analysis. The people can't make good decisions on energy issues on a steady diet of superficial or sensational energy news.

One might say the press is in its own clutches: the cause and cure are both within its hands. And it's the responsible press—not the government, not the advertisers, not even the customers—that has both the duty and the power to correct any deficiencies and live up to its own lofty aims.

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LETTERS

A "Chic" Artist Rebuts

To borrow a phrase from Ezra Pound, someone ought to warn your readers that Carter Ratcliff's remarks about artists in your April issue ["The 'Art' of Chic"] are not strawberry tarts. To begin with, my name is not spelled with an accent. My first works shown in public in 1964 were timber pieces as were my last in 1980 at Paula Cooper. The Guggenheim Museum did not buy a work of mine until 1979. Heiner Friedrich's name is spelled wrong. No work of mine is on offer at $200,000 or any amount near that. The only change that has occurred in my work in the last 15 years is that it has gotten better. I no more belong on any list of art superstars than Ratcliff's trash belongs in the pages of any reputable periodical.

Carl Andre
New York, New York

Carter Ratcliff replies: My article describes the trademark images that blue-chip artists use to maintain their status. Thus I mentioned Andre's metal sculptures, which are crucial to his reputation, not his works made of wood, which look very much like wooden sculptures crucial to the reputation of Alexander Rodchenko (1891-1956). The art-star career patterns I sketched are patterns that Andre has followed assiduously for almost 20 years.

The question of Andre and the Guggenheim does not revolve around the museum's purchase of an Andre sculpture in 1979. Much more important is the imprimatur the Guggenheim granted all of Andre's work (even the wood pieces) by putting on an Andre retrospective in 1970.

As for the $200,000 price tag—the editors apologize for the error. The average price for Mr. Andre's work is $30,000.

Controversial Chayefsky

May I make the following points concerning your article on Paddy Chayefsky and his feud with Ken Russell over *Altered States* ["Paddy Chayefsky: The Agonies of a Screenwriter," May]. When I visited the set of the film at the beginning of the production period, I sat next to Chayefsky and watched Russell rehearse a scene set in an Italian restaurant in which a great deal of scientific jargon punctuates the dialogue. Russell sat at the table with the actors, listening intently to see that they spoke their lines word-perfectly and with a variety of emotional shadings. So much for the oft-repeated myth that Russell cares only for the visual design of his films and not for dialogue or performance. He directed the actors to speak their lines with dispatch, since as scientists and academics they would not be hesitant expressing themselves in "technicalese" Russell was not, therefore, trying to speed up the dialogue "just to get it over with," as Chayefsky suggests.

Gene D. Phillips
Professor of English
Loyola University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

Every screenwriter knows that if he gets 50 percent of his ideas on the screen, he's lucky. So why the front cover and pages of breast-beating from the somewhat overrated Chayefsky?

Dale Robinson
Woodland Hills, California

Broadway: No Investment Paradise

In response to your article "Broadway: The Great Red Way" by Michael Sivy [May]: What kind of idiot, I ask myself, would invest in theatrical productions? Everyone *but* the investor gets his/her share off the top. The hired hands get their salaries and wages. The suppliers get theirs. The creative people get pieces of the gross. The investor gets a share of the residue, in the unlikely event there is anything left. I conclude that the suckers who put up the money are: illiterate, bedazzled, in the 99.99 percent tax bracket, or reckless gamblers with a compulsion to lose. Barnum was probably right; there is a sucker born every minute. But there are not enough of them to keep the theater alive.

Allan Easton
El Cajon, California

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Thoughts on Literature

LANGUAGE IS NOT just an instrument but an environment. It is a vital part of the philosophical and political conditioning of a society. Attitudes are tied to the power of words to ennoble or condemn, augment or detract, glorify or demean. Negative language infects the human subconscious from the time a person first learns to speak. Prejudice is metabolized in the bloodstream of society.

ARGUMENTS OVER the ivory tower versus the arena are usually a waste of time. They tend to juxtapose Art against Involvement. They assume that creativity never needs its champions, that there is no connection between the shape of the society and the condition of the arts, and that the world of ideas is somehow separate from the world in which great books are written, or great music composed, or great canvases painted, or great dramas staged.

THE WRITER'S ART is measured by the ability to transcend personal memory. The function of a writer is to widen the path to the subconscious, to awaken memories of the race, to refine the ability of an individual to have contact with life, to be at one with others.

TOO MANY CURRENT NOVELS put situations ahead of people. It is felt, apparently, that characters exist for the purpose of accommodating a plot, thus minimizing the human potential and demonstrating the limitless possibilities of personal shrinkage. This is not the way to write good novels, much less great ones. There is nothing wrong with the audience; it is not true that people find the real world so dramatic that they can see no excitement in the product of a writer's imagination. Give readers a book with people they care about and they will queue up to shake the author's hand.

THE FAILURE OF some novelists to create real people can often be related to their failure to deal with the inner man. One suspects that some authors would rather be found dead than caught in the act of shedding an honest tear. Our main complaint is directed at the apparently increasing tendency of authors to stay outside rather than to explore the inside of their characters.

AT LEAST TWO EXPERIENCES are shared by every serious writer. The first is the yearning or determination to write his heart out in one Big Book, one that would fulfill itself and himself. The second is the dread of finality as represented not only by the difficulty in knowing when a book is finished but also the reluctance to part with it. A novel is a possessing embryo that consumes the imagination and drains the mind. But it also nourishes and replenishes. Thus it becomes a process of growth and change for the novelist himself. The writer seeks to hold onto his novel—because of the painful joy of creative work, with its continuity and uninterrupted purpose, and because he feels that what he has done can be made better if he keeps it within constant reach.

A book carries nothing less than the life of the mind.

NO ONE NEED be intimidated into a feeling of total nullity or grim acquiescence if he disagrees with critics in literature, art, music, or anything else. The individual has the best credentials in the world for reacting: He has his own taste buds. They may not coincide with those of others, but at least they are his own, and the more he uses them, the keener they become. No critic of stature—whether in literature or art or music—expects other people to take leave of their individual senses. The critic applies his special training and knowledge to the work before him. He defines his standards. He sees himself as part of the total process by which a culture advances toward excellence. He certainly doesn't resent disagreement. And he doesn't discourage or disparage individual reactions—not if he is worth listening to, that is.

IT IS NOT TRUE that one picture is worth a thousand words. It takes only a few words—if they are the right words—to ignite the imagination and produce pictures in the mind far more focused and far more colorful than anything within the range of electronic communications.

A BOOK IS the most varied product in the world. Its physical aspects are secondary to the range of thoughts and images it attempts to transfer to the mind of the reader. What is carried by the book is nothing less than the life of the mind.

SPEED READING and instant knowledge are to be distrusted. Few joys of the mind can compare with the experience of lingering over a well-wrought image or hovering over an evocative passage. "Some people," said Alexander Pope, "will never learn anything. . . because they understand everything too soon." —**N.C.**

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JULY SPOTLIGHTS

Music

Used to be that music before Bach was a vast unknown. No longer, thanks in large part to Michael and Kay Jaffee and the small number of like-minded early-music devotees they assembled into the **Waverly Consort**. Since 1964 they have been consorting with the shades of medieval and Renaissance composers to bring alive their beautiful and exquisite sounds—the plucked strings of hollow lutes, the organic resonance of wooden woodwinds, the pure line of vibratoless voices—and their engaging and often quite complex compositions.

You can hear this ancient music in ideally sympathetic surroundings this month when the Consort arrives at the Caramoor Festival in Katonah, New York. The ensemble will perform music from medieval and Renaissance Spain in Caramoor's particularly apt, red-tiled, cloistered Spanish courtyard. An ideal summer evening's relief from the 20th century. (July 19.)

HENRY DAUMAN

The Waverly Consort will offer a Spanish repertoire in Caramoor's Spanish courtyard.

Art

America's answer to social realism? With "The Russian Revolution From Marx to Mayakovsky" in mind, one might well answer, **Larry Rivers** and Social Surrealism. Though more often identified with the Abstract Expressionists, Rivers shares with the Surrealists a deep sense of irony and a love of icon-busting. Since he burst upon the art scene in 1953, with his revised version of that kitsch classic, "Washington Crossing the Delaware," no subject has been safe from his inimitable wit.

The Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C., will be presenting 44 of Rivers's works donated by the museum's benefactor. Not a full retrospective—the collection is concentrated in the period from 1953 to 1965 and then skips 10 years to include some recent paintings (that have been generally less well received)—the exhibition should still give a stimulating view of the provocative artist's irreverent career. (July 16 through September 20.)

"Little French Money," painted by icon-busting artist Larry Rivers in 1962.

Theater

Last time Henry V appeared on the stage at the **American Shakespeare Theatre** in Stratford, Connecticut, he led a cast of hockey players to victorious battle in France. Sometime later, Richard III walked on dressed as Napoleon in an incoherent production that seemed to signal the final decline in the summer theater's none-too-glorious history.

Help may be on the way this summer in the person of newly appointed director Peter Coe. Known in the past for somewhat eccentric Shakespeare productions himself, Coe has promised this time to give us a season of "solid Shakespeare." He has signed two major stars to recreate previous Shakespearean successes: Christopher Plummer as Henry V and James Earl Jones as Othello. If Coe's productions reach the levels his stars have achieved in the past, the operation could find respectability at last. (*Henry V:* July 7 through August 2; *Othello:* August 4 through 30.)

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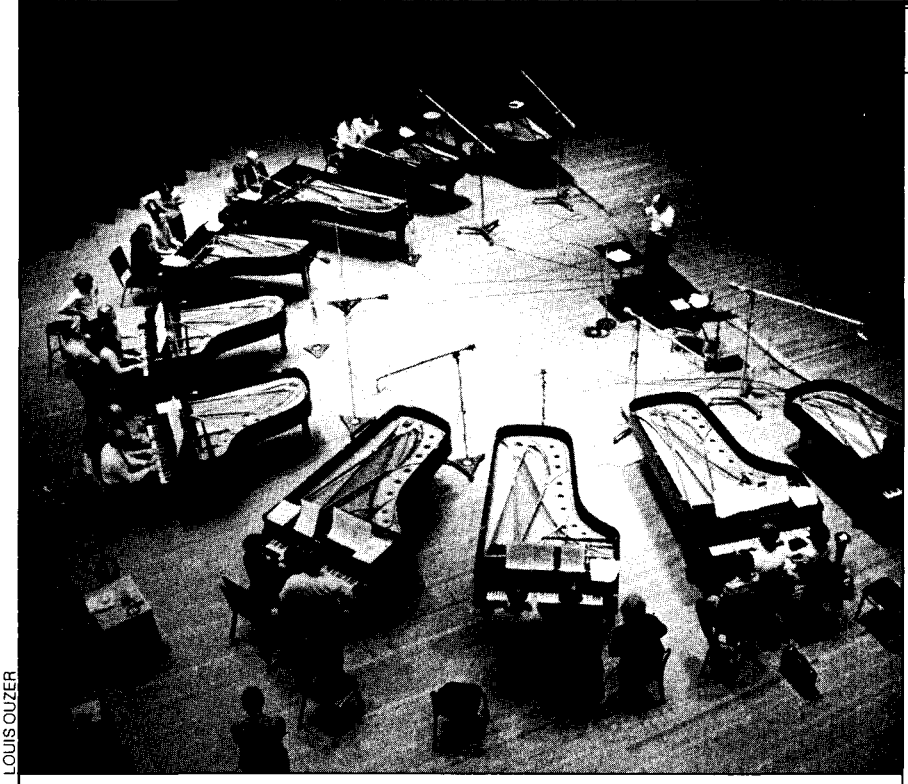
LELLI & MASOTTI

The Teatro Alla Scala Opera Ballet will make its U.S. debut with Rudolf Nureyev's staging of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Dance

Centuries ago, before ballet was ballet, they were dancing it at La Scala. Officially established as the **Teatro alla Scala Opera Ballet**, this troupe, based in Milan's world-famous opera house, traces its origins back to the banquet-fêtes of 15th-century Italy, where the forerunners of classical ballets were first danced. Despite its base of operations, this is not just another first-rate opera company's second-rate dance corps. It is a respected ensemble in its own right.

Headed by Italy's prima ballerina assoluta Carla Fracci and guest artist Rudolf Nureyev, La Scala will make its U.S. debut at New York's Metropolitan Opera House this month. The 74-member company will perform Nureyev's staging of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*—with Dame Margot Fonteyn appearing at all performances as Lady Capulet. Other ballets include *The Miraculous Mandarin* and *Giselle*. (July 13 through August 1.)



LOUIS QUZER

Eugene List and pianistic cohorts recording a Gottschalkian Monster Concert.

Monster Concert

What has 10 pianos, 40 pianists, 400 fingers, 880 piano keys, and plays Gottschalk? Eugene List's **Monster Concert**, and like a musical IRT it shakes the plaster off walls and sets chandeliers to swaying. Pianist List bases his program on spectaculars originally staged more than 100 years ago by America's first matinee-idol virtuoso, Louis Moreau Gottschalk, who arranged his own music and cavalry-charge symphonic works for large broods of Chickerings.

List will stage his Monster at Michigan's well-known Interlochen Music Camp this summer where he is assured a wealth of eager young talent to fuel his experiments in mega-sound. Ringing out over the beautiful Interlochen countryside, Rossini's overture to *Semiramide* will compete in decibels with a polypiano transcription of Gottschalk's *A Night in the Tropics* and other musical golems. (July 29.)

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Museums and Corruption

by Lee Seldes

Most visitors to art museums naturally assume that the paintings and sculptures on view have been chosen exclusively for aesthetic and historic reasons. But every now and then, critics have charged that the motivating forces behind some public exhibitions and acquisitions might be colored by the possibility of private gain for curators, directors, and trustees.

Do museum insiders sometimes put self-aggrandizement above their fiduciary roles and the public interest in collecting, protecting, and exhibiting our art treasures? Do independent art dealers secretly control certain museum dealings and exhibits? Do museum officials, tempted by skyrocketing prices of art, sell and trade masterpieces that they hold in public trust, to the detriment of the museum? Are there collusions between dealers and museum staffs that bring kickbacks for services rendered? Are certain exhibits created deliberately to inflate the value of donations for tax purposes?

There are no easy or uniform answers, unfortunately. But these questions are some of the prickly problems of ethics and corruption currently plaguing museum lawyers and professionals across the country. Their concerns were set in motion by a wave of art scandals over the past decade, beginning in 1972, with the Metropolitan Museum of Art's notorious disposal of a fine legacy of masterpieces in bulk exchanges and at cut-rate prices to a few private dealers favored by the Met administration. Many of the great paintings that vanished forever from the Met's collection were part of a munificent bequest from a dowdy dowager named Adelaide Milton de Groot, who was wooed and won by Met officials—and whose gift consequently has become synonymous in the art world with a museum's perfidy. As a result of the subsequent inquiry by the New York State attorney general, the Met's board ignominiously agreed to allow the attorney general's office to approve all future sales from the collection valued at more than $25,000.

Since that debacle, many museums have adopted suggested rules of ethics patterned on a general code established by the American Association of Museums in 1978. Still, it is not clear what the penalties should be for violation of such rules—and it's even less clear who should police museum officials to ensure that ethics are observed.

"Corruption in museums is far more prevalent than you think," says anthropologist Dr. Edmund Carpenter, who should know. In 1975, Carpenter, a trustee of the Museum of the American Indian in New York City, exposed the fact that the museum's director and some of his fellow trustees had sold off thousands of objects from the museum's prized collection of Indian artifacts secretly to collectors and to dealers who in turn made small fortunes selling the objects to other collectors. Again, the New York State attorney general's office investigated, terming the losses "surreptitious and wasteful." Though no evidence of kickbacks was ever established, the attorney general removed the officials involved, charging them with mishandling their fiduciary responsibilities, and reconstituted the museum.

This investigation sparked yet another into the Brooklyn Museum leading to a lawsuit for $1.5 million in actual and punitive damages to the public, against Brooklyn's former curator of primitive art and acting director Michael Kan. (Kan is now deputy director of the Detroit Institute of Arts, a position he was offered and had accepted before the current lawsuit began.) Kan and a number of dealers are charged with conspiring to present falsely low appraisals on dozens of important objects in Brooklyn's primitive art collection so that the museum's board would deaccession them at fractional values in exchange for minor items from Kan's alleged dealer friends. Again, the dealers sold the museum's objects soon afterward to collectors, allegedly for handsome profits. And again, the issue is conflict of interest, since Kan was allegedly trading privately with the dealers for himself. At this writing, the suit is still pending.

While unraveling this tangled skein of dealer-curator-collector relationships, the New York investigators also discovered that a member of Brooklyn's self-perpetuating governing board had been selling his primitive art collection secretly through yet another prominent dealer to the museum. Self-dealing by trustees of tax-exempt charities is forbidden by both state and federal law. The Brooklyn trustee still sits on the

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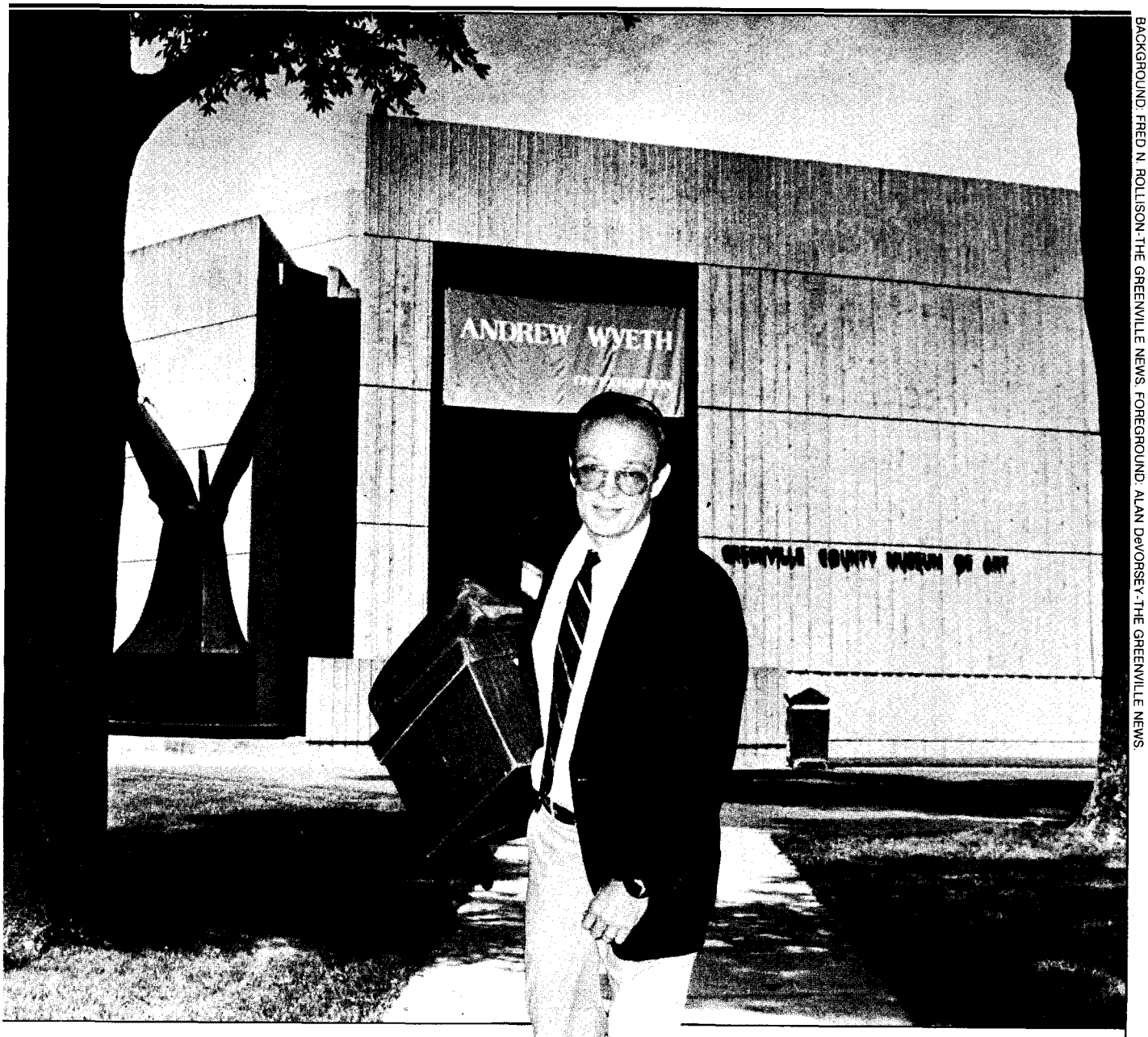

BACKGROUND: FRED N. ROLLISON-THE GREENVILLE NEWS. FOREGROUND: ALAN DeVORSEY-THE GREENVILLE NEWS.

board—but the board has agreed to abide in the future by a special code of ethics reviewed by the attorney general.

Not long ago, the vice-president of collections at the Art Institute of Chicago was denounced—but only after his death—for having promoted the art of friendly dealers and collectors when he made purchases or assembled temporary loan exhibits, but no one could prove that his curious choices were brought about by anything more than his eclectic taste. Elsewhere, eyebrows were raised over a $5,000 "honorarium" paid by a dealer to a curator at the Los Angeles County Museum who wrote a catalogue for the dealer's gallery—thus puffing the importance of the gallery's paintings at the same time that he was recommending purchases from the same gallery for the museum. And at the Maryhill Museum near Goldendale, Washington, a long record of mysterious buying and selling led to the museum's being publicly characterized as "the trading post."

There seems to be one factor common to each and every museum scandal: an art dealer unconcerned with museum ethics, who is lurking in the wings, pockets filled with cash, probing for the weak link, for the museum employee willing to compromise the integrity of the museum. Yet over the years, though insiders have heard rumors of numbered Swiss bank accounts as well as gifts of cars, art, and

Jack A. Morris, Jr. (foreground) leaving the Greenville County Museum of Art (background), October 15, 1980, the night he submitted his resignation as the Greenville museum's director.

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cash, public investigations have seldom uncovered more than hearsay, with no hard evidence of graft and kickbacks.

There are countless ways of cashing in on art—but few routes to sniffing out improprieties. Normally, transgressions can be covered up and dealt with by a museum's board, quietly behind closed doors "for the sake of the museum." Insiders who protest can quickly become outsiders, and the concern for a proper public image usually prevails.

But last year an epic scandal erupted in a small Southern museum that exposed for the first time how dealer kickbacks can work and the corrupting effects such handouts can have on innocent staff. Before the details could receive an airing, two employees had to defy the museum director's explicit gag order, hire the best litigator in the city, line up outside experts to testify—and another lawyer had to file a detailed Freedom of Information Request to open the museum's files for public inspection. The case, on public record, is certain to cause serious ramifications.

Holly and Arthur Magill (foreground) and Jamie Wyeth's portrait of Rudolf Nureyev (background), a painting the Magills bought on their first art-shopping trip to New York in 1978, and which they later donated to the Greenville County museum.

In his 14 years with the Greenville County Museum of Art in Greenville, South Carolina, director Jack A. Morris, Jr. had put Greenville on the cultural map. The museum had been transformed from a drafty old house on the outskirts of the city with a two-person staff to a sleek four-story cement trapezoid next to the library on Heritage Green. Morris directed a staff of 34 along with some 50 volunteers in the $2.2 million building with a $1.1 million art-school wing. He had accomplished all this with the enthusiastic help of the museum's major benefactors, a retired textile magnate named Arthur Magill and his wife, Holly.

The Magills trusted Morris's ability and judgment enough to pay his way through Europe and Mexico to visit museums. Holly Magill was a member of the County Museum Commission, which served as the museum's public board of trustees, while Arthur was the power behind the Art Association, the museum's private benefactory arm.

In 1977, Magill was 70 years old and intended to leave the museum a "substantial" legacy in his will to acquire a permanent collection. But, one day, Morris, then 37, suggested that Magill start a collection himself so that, as Magill remembers, "I could enjoy the paintings during my lifetime, and still benefit the museum by leaving art rather than money."

So it was only natural that, when the Magills flew up to New York in February 1978 to acquire the nucleus of their new collection, they should ask Jack Morris along to advise them. In return for his travel expenses, he would introduce them to important Manhattan dealers specializing in American art. On that maiden trip they visited a number of galleries, including the Kennedy Galleries on West 57th Street, where director Lawrence Fleischman sold them $197,000 worth of paintings.

Later, Morris discussed a "consulting fee" privately with Fleischman. The Magills were somewhat surprised when they learned of it afterwards, over lunch at a hotel coffee shop. But Morris told them it was "customary for advisers in this type of situation to receive some compensation from the galleries." Since they trusted Morris and assumed such a consulting fee would be nominal, they did not question him further.

Some time later, Morris convinced

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the Magills to buy $97,000 worth of paintings from Frank Fowler, a Chattanooga dealer; and during 1978 he accompanied them on two more New York art-shopping trips during which the Magills made another $362,000 purchase from Fleischman. Then in March 1979, when the Magills returned from a European holiday, they found an excited Jack Morris awaiting them. It was the opportunity of a lifetime! The Magills might be able to acquire 26 paintings by Andrew Wyeth from the collection of movie mogul Joseph E. Levine. Dealer Frank Fowler had told Morris that Levine might be willing to let the paintings go for $3.6 million. Fowler's partner in the transaction, as in many others, was Fred Woolworth, scion of the dime-store fortune and owner of the Coe Kerr Gallery in New York. All the paintings had been exhibited in the Wyeth show two years before at the Metropolitan Museum, which naturally had greatly increased their value. Time was of the essence, Morris emphasized, because both the Met and the Boston Museum wanted the paintings, and Joe Levine was unpredictable, always changing his mind.

"In the museum profession, receiving commissions is unethical—and if the board approves it, the board itself would be unethical..."

The Magills discussed the offer. Money was not really a problem; Arthur had sold his half of the business, Her Majesty Industries, for $8.5 million in 1976. No one doubted the benefit for Greenville. The Magills agreed to pay a flying visit to New York to see the paintings. But Arthur was astonished when his son-in-law inquired: "How much is Morris making? What is his commission?" Magill replied tartly, "Nonsense! Of course, Jack gets nothing; it's for the museum!"

But after he'd seen and decided to buy the collection, Magill found himself nagged by his worldly son-in-law's impertinent question. Magill asked Fowler whether Morris was getting a commission on the deal. Reluctantly, Fowler said yes. Magill pressed: "How much?" Fowler replied, "$80,000." Magill says he was shocked and disappointed (though Morris insists he had told Magill about the $80,000 already). But the Magills were fearful that Levine would change his mind and Greenville would lose the collection to the Met or Boston. They authorized the purchase, later paying for it with two checks to Levine for a total of $3,110,000 (one to the Joseph E. Levine Foundation and the second to Joseph E. Levine Presents, Inc.), and a separate check to Fowler and Woolworth for $444,100 (of which both dealers retained $181,850 apiece and paid Morris $80,400). Six weeks later, the triumphant dealers would tell the press—without revealing the price—that it was "the largest single sale of American art in history."

Meanwhile, the museum was in turmoil. For the past year, Morris had spent little time at the museum. When he was around, he worked behind locked doors with his confidante and assistant, a former Texas co-ed with little prior administrative experience. Directives were issued through her, and she became the surrogate director during Morris's many absences. The three qualified department heads who, as a team under Morris, nominally ran the museum found themselves undermined and their jobs threatened. After being denied a leave of absence, the chief curator resigned.

Allison Muller, a new curator who had broad professional experience at the National Gallery in Washington and at the Boston Museum, accepted when Morris offered her the chief curatorship. She had definite ideas about how to improve her department. But, in mid-May, Muller heard the rumor that Morris had taken an $80,000 commission on the Wyeths and it worried her. Not only was she married to a lawyer and informed about conflicts of interest, but she was well-versed in the ethical code of the American Association of Museums and the corresponding Museum Directors Association. Commissions, she knew, were strictly forbidden, representing an obvious conflict, putting private personal gain over the interests of the institution. Small fees for lectures and honorariums were okay, but only under $500 or so—and then only if full disclosure had been made first, and consented to by the museum board.

Muller faced Morris with the rumor, which he denied. Later he would claim that he did not consider the payment "a commission," as she had put it, but "a consultation fee." While on vacation that July, Muller learned that Morris had denied her a secretary and had added secretarial duties to her curatorship. If she did not accept this, Morris told her, her job would be abolished. Muller filed a grievance complaint with the County Museum Commission. Morris and all his cohorts testified against her, charging her with troublemaking and incompetence. But with the help of Sylvia Marchant, director of education for 10 years, who stepped forward of her own accord, Muller won and remained as curator. During her testimony she told of the confrontation over the $80,000 Wyeth commission and of Morris's denial.

When Arthur Magill heard about Muller's run-in with Morris over the commission and his denial, he also confronted Morris, and wound up calling him "a damned liar." In November 1979, the Magills deliberately excluded Morris from a trip to Andrew Wyeth's home in Maine, where the Magills bought 233 drawings and watercolors through Frank Fowler. Magill reports he refused when Morris had the temerity to invite himself along, after which Magill extracted a promise from Fowler that Morris would get no commission on the sale.

Morris then began to blame Magill for his problems: "The trouble with this museum," he said, "is Arthur Magill." He was now "an overzealous benefactor," who "interfered in the affairs of the museum." Morris issued an order that, in effect, forbade museum employees to discuss "sensitive issues" with *anyone at all*, even, he implied, their families. If they disobeyed, Morris would consider this grounds for dismissal.

Increasingly suspicious of Morris,

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Magill set about trying to discover whether Morris had also received commissions from the Kennedy Galleries' sales. On their own, the Magills had recently spent another $348,400 there. Eventually, seven months after their initial inquiry, Fleischman advised them that the full amount of his payments to Morris for "research and consultation" was $81,000 on nearly $1 million in sales.

Finally, in August, after Fleischman detailed the payments in a notorized statement, the Museum Commission agreed to authorize a three-person grievance panel to hear Allison Muller and Sylvia Marchant's complaints against Morris. The hearings were held *in camera* in five sessions over three long hot weeks and were documented by more than 1,500 pages of transcribed testimony, depositions, and affidavits—apparently the first such public record of a dispute in an American museum.

What emerged from the hearings was anything but a pretty picture. Morris had not only taken some $200,000 in "consultation fees" over two years on $5.4 million in sales to the Magills and other collectors, but he had billed dealers for art the Magills bought alone, and also for those paintings directly donated to the museum. Morris's personal accountant was the museum's accountant, and Morris had personally billed the museum for expenses on the four trips he took with the Magills that the Magills claim they had already paid for. He even deducted these same expenses from his income taxes.

The charges and countercharges had infected the entire museum. At every level from the museum cafe's kitchen staff to the guards to the upper echelons, unfair favoritism and promotion of Morris's supporters over more qualified staff had bred fights and factionalism. The conservator, John Petty, whom Morris had later put in charge of the museum's properties, was dealing in paintings on consignment from outside dealers in his museum office. For a fee, he also appraised gifts, often unrelated to the museum's collection of American art, for private donors to the museum.

One such appraisal was produced by the conservator when a businessman gave the museum a dubious collection of artificial and semiprecious gemstones. After his $300,000 appraisal was questioned by the IRS, Morris ordered the staff photographer to set up the gems as though they were on actual exhibit in the museum and photograph them. The photographer refused to fake it. The chief curator, after Morris gave him the same order, reluctantly agreed.

Frank Fowler, the Chattanooga dealer, testified in support of Morris. Like Morris, Fowler claimed the payments were "consultation fees" not commissions. For museum directors, he asserted, this is "common practice. I know many people that [accept such payments], as long as it is in the open—I mean, with the approval of the board." Morris contended that a vague statement made at the commission meeting in 1978 that he had "provided consultation services for museums, galleries, and collectors with compensation" amounted to full disclosure, and that the board's approval was implied when it failed to question him further.

> ***"The garment industry is rough," says Arthur Magill, "but, it's lily-white compared to this!"***

But as Thomas W. Leavitt, director of the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell—and one of the museum directors who helped write the profession's ethical code—testified, even had Morris disclosed in advance his very sizable fees to the commission, it would not have obviated the morality problem: "In the museum profession, receiving a commission is considered unethical, and if the board approves the conduct or the receiving of a commission by a curator or director, the board itself would be guilty of unethical conduct. . . ."

Six weeks later, on October 16, the commission voted seven to four to demand Morris's resignation.

By now, at the Greenville County Museum, things have settled down. One by one, Morris's cohorts, including the conservator, have left. An administrator from the county is running the museum until the new director selected by the commission (James D. Bowne, from the Everhart Museum in Scranton, Pennsylvania) takes over September 1. As for Jack Morris, he never repaid the $200,000, though lawyers for the complainants petitioned that he do so. He has moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, where he has become an art dealer. Today, he says, "Having seen it from the other side of the fence—the dealer's side—and seeing museum situations, I find that what I was doing was not at all uncommon."

Nevertheless, the affair has left its scars. Says Arthur Magill, "I've been up against all kinds of practices in the garment industry, and I've been bruised in the process. It's rough, but it's lily-white compared to this!"

Despite the museum experts' testimony, Larry Fleischman contends that the fees to Morris were not unethical: "All the money came from the Magills, not the museum." It was a built-in cost of the art they bought, he explains. "The Magills knew that Morris was taking fees," he says and, like Fowler, Fleischman adds, "It's done all the time."

What happened at Greenville may be symptomatic. With the soaring prices paid for art today, the temptations to acquire a piece of the action must increase proportionately. But as one of the experts quoted at the Morris hearing said: "I think it's rather unusual in the museum profession. Like robbery or rape, it probably happens—but that doesn't mean it's all right."

The Greenville denouement opened up a Pandora's box of questions about museums and conflicts of interest that hitherto have not been exposed for the record. Museum lawyers predict that in the Eighties the public will demand more scrutiny into the guardianship of the treasuries of our nation's artistic heritage. But, with the traditional secrecy inherent in art dealings and the lack of legal regulation or outside watchdogs, such inquiries will not be easy, especially in museums with private corporate boards. So when museum people start talking mysteriously and hint at happenings that might damage "the museum's reputation," prick up your ears. There might be an insider on the take—and someone ought to look into it. ■

Lee Seldes, author of *The Legacy of Mark Rothko*, and a former *Newsweek* reporter, writes on art, politics, and justice.

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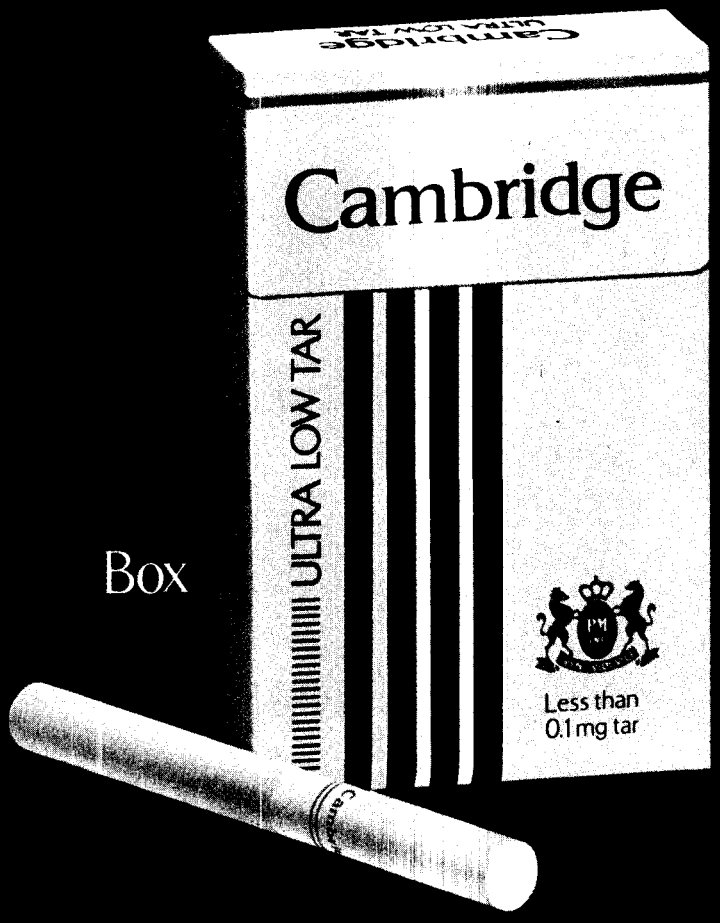

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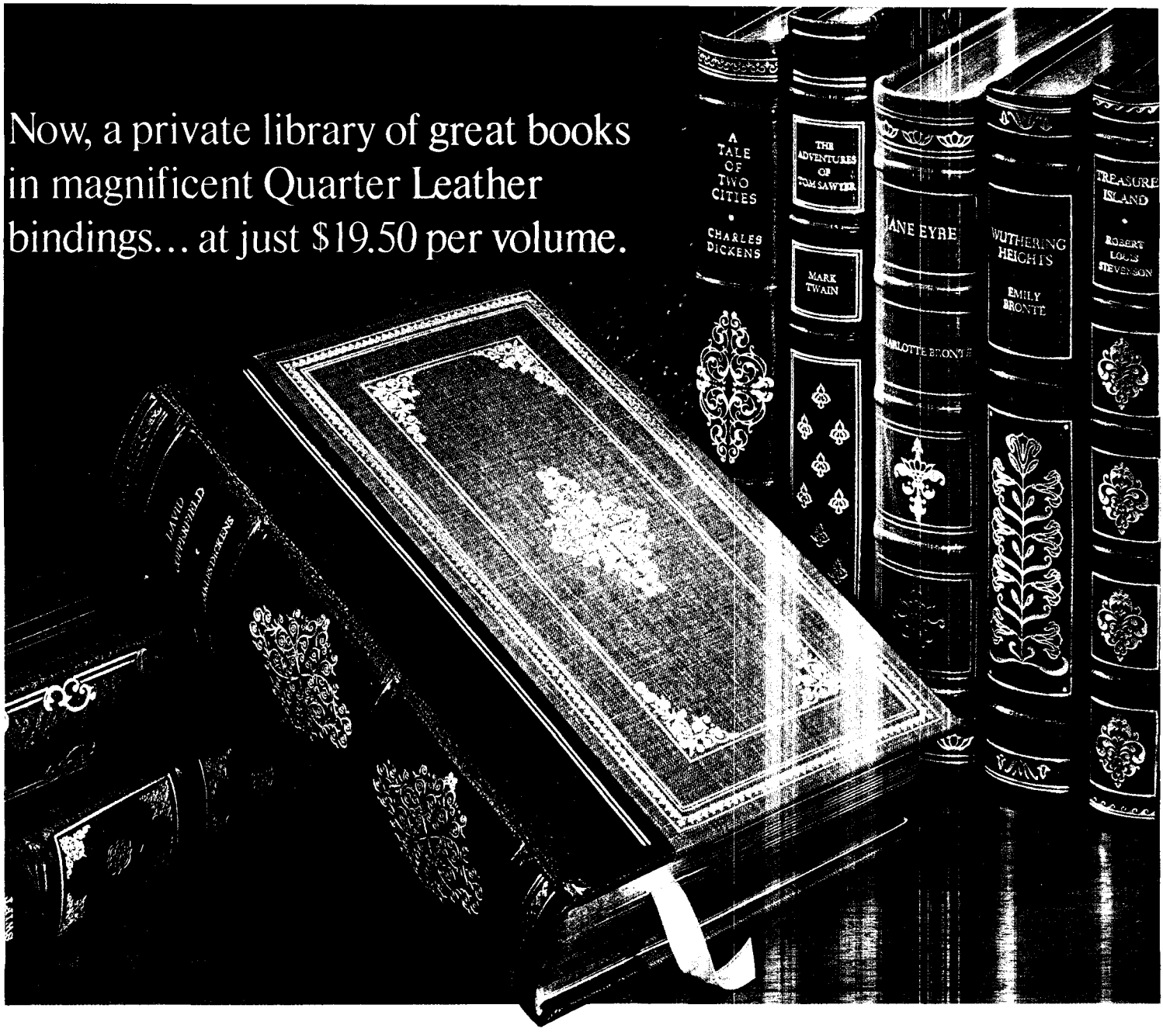
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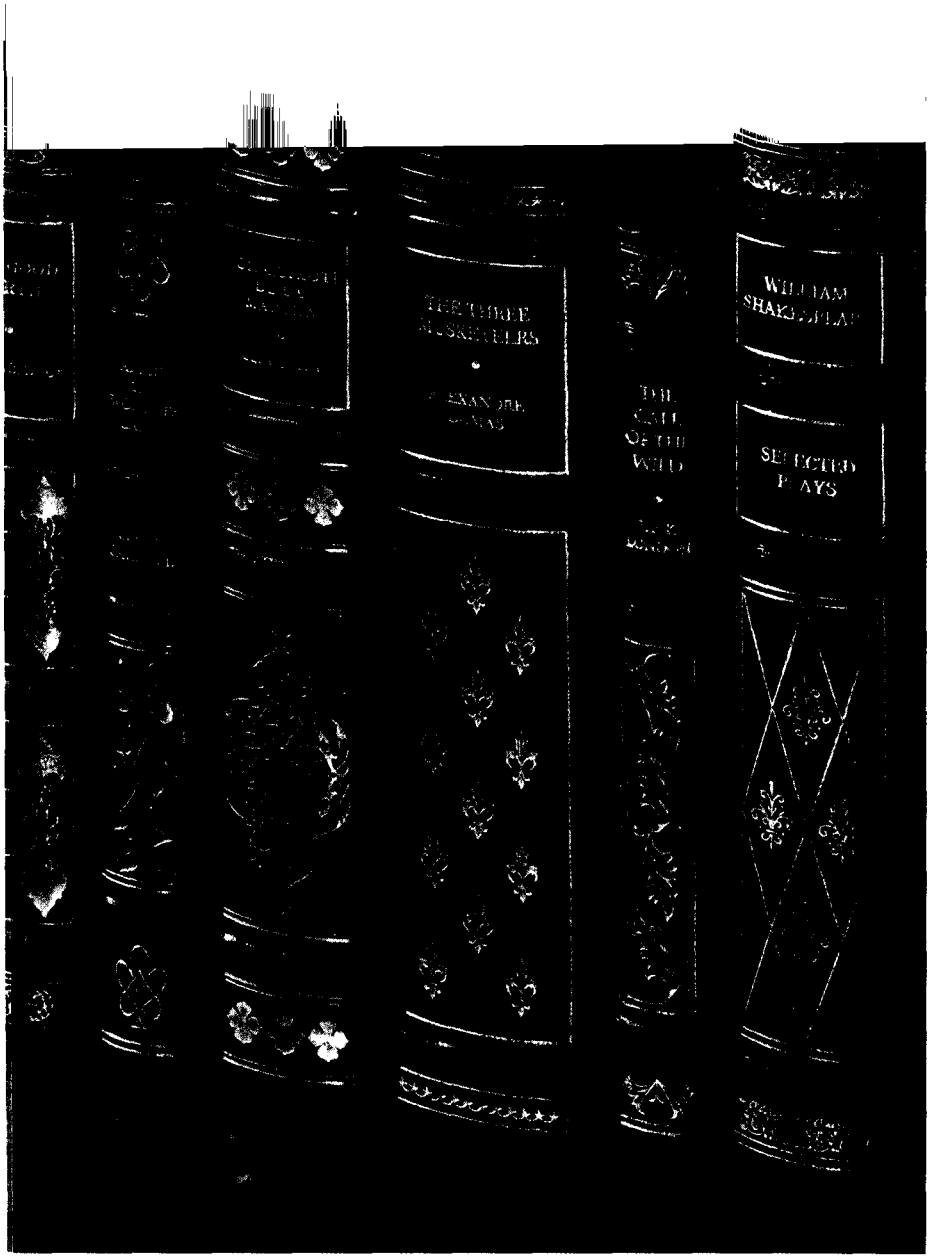

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Francis Coppola's Biggest Gamble

by Scot Haller

PETER SOBEL

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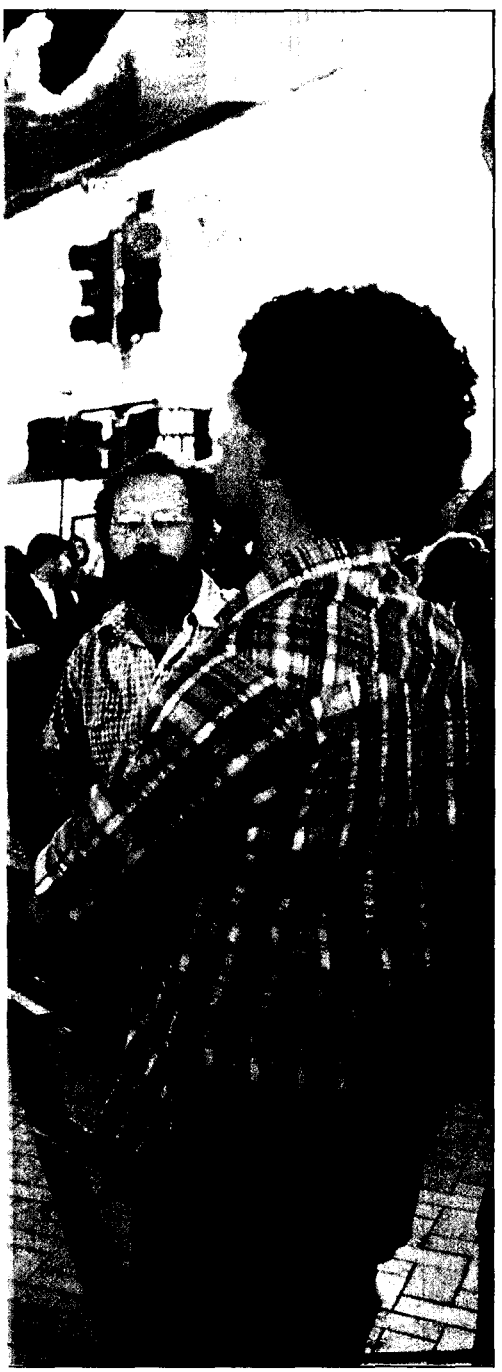
Underneath the flashing neon signs, next to the cumbersome camera equipment, Gene Kelly is offering advice. "Cut the legs out of that bit," he says. "The public will never know it's gone." Dressed in a navy blue sweater, checkered slacks, and a sporting cap, Kelly looks as if someone has plucked him off the putting green and dropped him onto the set of a movie musical. While cast and crew wait for scene 106, take 22 of *One From the Heart* to commence, Kelly confers on a dance combination with choreographer Kenny Ortega. Ortega is four decades Kelly's junior and wearing black leather pants, a high-fashion black T-shirt with wrap-around zipper, and bright red socks. Past these unlikely collaborators walks a high-heeled showgirl with a button pinned to her scant, sequin-speckled costume. It reads: "I Believe in Francis C."



Director Francis Coppola (on ladder) in the middle of a sound stage at Zoetrope Studios, where he has recreated Las Vegas for his musical, *One From the Heart*.

Welcome to Zoetrope Studios—or Hollywood, Francis Coppola style. Elsewhere in the city, production companies are closing down as the movie industry copes with shrinking audiences, rising costs, and smaller-than-anticipated ancillary markets. But Coppola, a constant maverick, has envisioned a different future, and he has engineered a brave new world at Zoetrope. Established 16 months ago by the award-winning writer-director of *The Godfather* (1972), *The Conversation* (1974), *The Godfather, Part II* (1974), and *Apocalypse Now* (1979), this studio is, as its production head Lucy Fisher notes, "a concept as well as a geographic location." The concept is this: an updated version of the old studio system, complete with contract players, contract writers, senior filmmakers on hand such as Gene Kelly, and a distinctive studio signature on each film it makes. With Zoetrope, that imprint should stand for projects believed to be too uncommercial, too expensive, or too unusual by the major studios. (In its earlier incarnation as a mere production company—with no Hollywood lot or moviemaking facilities of its own—Zoetrope was responsible for *American Graffiti* and *The Black Stallion* as well as the Coppola films.)

In an era when Paramount or Universal constitutes a single company in a vast conglomerate, Zoetrope is the project, pride, and property of one man, 42-year-old Francis Coppola (he no longer uses his middle name, Ford). It has been his long-simmering ambition to mate the Old Hollywood of solid craftsmanship, company loyalty, and sound-stage productions with the New Hollywood of computer wizardry, film-school graduates, and sophisticated storytelling. As governor of this ramshackle, 10-acre, would-be Shangri-La, Coppola has added movie mogul to his impressive list of roles: He is already established as a screenwriter, director, producer, advocate of technological advances, self-appointed American ambassador to the European filmmaking community, and patron saint of the movie-brat generation.

Imposing and impulsive, Coppola has a natural affinity for anything outsized. Even his beard is bushy and his waist wide. "Francis likes living on the brink," says Paramount Pictures chairman Barry Diller. Indeed, his last film, *Apocalypse Now*, nearly drove him over the brink. On that controversial Vietnam epic, the director gambled 16 months of shooting on location in the Philippines, a budget that ballooned from $12 million to $31 million, and the near-dissolution of his 19-year marriage to wife Eleanor. (She, in turn, got her revenge. She chronicled her husband's manic extravagances, inconsistencies, and infidelities of that period in a published, equally controversial memoir, *Notes*).

Zoetrope ranks as the most ambitious undertaking yet from a man who has consciously escalated the challenges in each of his successive endeavors. Instead of a $31 million war film that must return $70 million in worldwide rentals just to break even, this time Coppola's challenge involves prime Hollywood real estate, full staff, and a plethora of projects that he is overseeing. A few months before he acquired Hollywood General Studios for $6.7 million in March 1980, Coppola told a reporter: "There's no one like Zanuck around anymore. And there are no studios like there used to be. I can envision Zoetrope being that way, with a great restaurant where we can all sit around ... the way it was, what I missed out on." Zoetrope still does not have a restaurant, although it does offer a screenwriting seminar twice a week for interested staff members. It sponsors an apprenticeship program, and it schedules a regular Friday afternoon party at which star and stagehand can fraternize. "In its best moments," says screenwriter B. Armyan Bernstein, who wrote *One From the Heart*, "it's like the small college we all wanted to go to."

But like the hero of his favorite movie, Michael Powell's *The Thief of Baghdad*—which was shot years ago on this same lot—Coppola is particu-

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Coppola respects filmmaking tradition: At Zoetrope, he has installed several old pros out of Hollywood's past. Above, the legendary dancer-choreographer Gene Kelly consults with Coppola about a dance routine on the set of *One From the Heart*.

larly susceptible to do-or-die situations. And already, Zoetrope has turned into one of those situations. Although it originally announced plans of six to eight films a year, the studio is only preparing two movies for imminent release—Coppola's *One From the Heart* and Caleb Deschanel's *The Escape Artist*—after 16 months of operation. A third movie, German director Win Wenders's *Hammett*, remains unfinished a year after shooting was completed. Caught between great expectations and fiscal facts, the mogul has been forced to close down his story department. All further projects are on hold. And once again, Coppola appears to have underestimated the cost of his vision.

"It's like I'm at a poker table with five guys," Coppola says. "And they're all betting two or three thousand dollars a hand, and I've got about 87 cents in front of me. So I'm always having to take off my shirt and bet my pants. Because I want to be in the game. I want to play."

Or as Coppola's longtime associate Fred Roos puts it, "We're always out there on the thin edge."

Born in 1939 in Detroit, Coppola grew up in New York, where his father, Carmine, played flute for Toscanini in the NBC orchestra. Coppola studied theater arts at Hofstra College on Long Island, graduating in 1959. He then parlayed campus fame at UCLA's film school into a staff position at Seven Arts. As a *Wunderkind* in Wonderland, he directed his first film for a major studio at age 27, turning his master's thesis into *You're a Big Boy Now* (1966), a coming-of-age comedy. After a big-budget studio flop, the musical *Finian's Rainbow*, and a small-budget "personal" flop, the drama *The Rain People* (1969), he won his first Oscar the next year as co-author of the screenplay for *Patton*. In 1972 *The Godfather* was released, and suddenly Coppola could afford to refuse any offer Hollywood might make. He became the senior member and father figure of the film-school generation (George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, Martin Scorcese) that was rising to power in the city of their dreams.

Those dreams seem to have been nurtured by old-fashioned studio movies watched at Saturday matinees. Even the name that Coppola selected for his operation reflects a respect for a venerable tradition: The original Zoetrope was an 1834 version of a rotating drum that had slits in its side. Through these slits one looked at a band of drawings lining the inside of the drum. When the drum revolved, these appeared to move like an animated cartoon, producing the earliest *motion* picture.

Unfortunately, the studio system Coppola admires began to fray during the late Forties—for several reasons: To begin with, a series of anti-trust suits banned the studios from ownership of the theater chains that provided guaranteed outlets for their products. At the same time, as America moved to the suburbs and television began its slow but steady infiltration of those homes, movie attendance plummeted. By 1951, U.S. theaters were selling 34 million fewer tickets *each week* than they had just three years earlier. No longer guaranteed an audience or an outlet, the studios changed production policies. They stopped making large numbers of B-movies and concentrated on big-budget films that might propel television watchers out of suburban living

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rooms. And as Hollywood unions muscled increasingly more lucrative contracts for their members, it became cheaper to shoot films on location with foreign crews. Accompanying these developments was the dismissal of contract players and writers. As a result, just as the legendary moguls of the era were passing away, their production facilities fell into disuse. In this evolution from factory to distribution center, the studio became less of a home for loyalists who made movies and more of a haven for agents, lawyers, accountants, and bottom-line businessmen who made deals.

Zoetrope, in addition to its contract policy and distinctive ambience, resembles the old-time studios in another way: It is dominated by one personality who sets policy and tone for the studio. Harry Cohn at Columbia, Darryl Zanuck at 20th Century-Fox, Jack Warner at Warner Bros. ruled their respective dominions with an autocratic hand that contributes as much to the lasting legend of their empires as do the classic films they made. Hollywood still treasures the line reportedly spoken by Bette Davis, explaining that she was attending Harry Cohn's funeral only "to make sure the son of a bitch is really dead." Around Zoetrope, one hears faint echoes of such comments: "There's a real need to keep Francis happy," says one executive. "After all, we're all here on his money." Lucy Fisher adds: "There's not much point in hiring the imagination and then harnessing it."

Nonetheless, Coppola's philosophical forefathers rose to power under different circumstances. Paramount Pictures was created by one-time furrier, Adolph Zukor, whose film background was not making movies, but exhibiting them. William Fox, the founder of 20th Century-Fox, began his career in the garment business. Before Harry Cohn started Columbia Pictures, he had worked on the business side of movie production. Even when Mary Pickford, Charles Chaplin, D.W. Griffith, and Douglas Fairbanks banded together in 1919 to create United Artists —a studio, like Zoetrope, bent on making movies outside the conventional system and sensibility—they did not deign to run the operation themselves. Instead, they hired a businessman—in fact, a former assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury—to serve as the company's first president.

By contrast, Coppola has no formal business background. "I've been putting on shows since I was a little kid," he says. "And I always hoped people would like what they saw when they came. That's enough about business that anyone should have to consider."

None of the executives Coppola has appointed at Zoetrope can boast extensive experience on the business side of moviemaking, either. President Robert Spiotta (also a Hofstra grad) spent 16 years in the oil industry; his most recent position before arriving at Zoetrope was marketing manager for Mobil Oil. Bernard Gersten, the executive vice-president, does have extensive production credits—but in New York theater, not Hollywood films. Lucy Fisher, the head of production, is a Harvard graduate who trained under the Alan Ladd, Jr. regime at Fox—but, at the age of 31, she's no long-term veteran. "The industry is called show *business* for a reason," says a producer at a rival studio. "And Francis doesn't really know about business. He doesn't want to, and he doesn't want anyone else around to question what he does know."

"It's like I'm at a poker table with five guys betting two or three thousand dollars, and I've got 87¢. So I take off my shirt and bet my pants."

In a notorious office memo circulated during the *Apocalypse Now* days, Coppola explained, "I am cavalier with money because I have to be, in order not to be terrified every time I make an artistic decision." Consequently, art and money have been dueling constantly at Zoetrope.

Currently, the kingpin project of Zoetrope is *One From the Heart*, a $23 million romantic fantasy musical set in Las Vegas over a Fourth of July weekend. The first film Coppola has directed since *Apocalypse Now*, it is labeled "a simple little love story" by the director. Outside the city limits of the neon Nevada metropolis, a live-together, middle-class couple (Frederic Forrest and Teri Garr) have a fight, split up, and venture into Vegas, where each finds a fantasy lover. Travel agent Garr meets Raul Julia, a lounge waiter and piano player. Gas-station attendant Forrest encounters Nastassia Kinski (the star of *Tess*), a high-wire artist who has run away from the circus. As in the mixed-couples musicals of an earlier era, there are several lavish production numbers, hundreds of extras, and a happy ending.

Instead of shooting the film on location, however, Coppola has opted for what he calls "a theatrical reality," recreating Las Vegas on the Zoetrope lot. Here in the heart of Hollywood stand the Vegas airport terminal, a desert motel, and a spectacular re-creation of the Vegas strip. Zoetrope's strip encompasses two sound stages and includes 125,000 light bulbs, 10 miles of neon, and a paved intersection. "I wanted to take a fable-like story and treat it almost the way Disney would approach a story in his animated films," says Coppola. "Treat it with very expressive sets and lighting and music that heighten the story. If we had made the movie in Las Vegas, it would have been just another relationship movie set on a real location with people jumping in and out of cabs, talking about their love affairs. I wanted to do something people hadn't seen before."

The decision to transform what was originally a modern-romance comedy set in Chicago into a studio-lot Las Vegas musical boosted the film's $15 million budget to $23 million. Tax-shelter investors were found to cover the additional amount, but just as the movie entered production, those investors pulled out. Coppola was required to offer his real-estate holdings as collateral for the necessary bank loans. Staff employees accepted half-pay during the cash-flow crisis. And in a melodramatic moment that moved Coppola to tears and prompted memories of Frank Capra movies, crew members voted against the wishes of their powerful unions and did not walk off the set, even though the week's payroll was not met. About

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this time, the "I Believe in Francis C." buttons first appeared.

What prompts that belief? For one thing, *The Godfather*, which has accumulated worldwide grosses approaching $300 million. As Coppola once begrudgingly observed, "You see, I could make five failures, five pictures that nobody liked, and I'd still be the guy who directed *The Godfather*." Since that film, Coppola has displayed a consistent talent for turning dark horses into winners. "There's something very Dostoyevskian about Francis," says the head of one production company, enunciating the industry consensus. "He works best when he's in trouble and in debt." Coppola didn't decide upon the narrative structure and ending of *The Godfather, Part II* until several weeks before the film's release. It then went on to snare six Academy Awards and an eight-figure gross (of which the director reportedly received 15 percent). Although making *Apocalypse Now* brought him to near bankruptcy, he will probably break even on the film after a network television sale.

Last January, while *One From the Heart* was in jeopardy, Zoetrope presented in New York a restored 1927 silent French epic *Napoleon* at Radio City Music Hall with a live orchestra playing a score composed by Coppola's father. The movie grossed $800,000 in a mere eight showings. Admittedly, with a live orchestra at each performance, *Napoleon* is an expensive project to mount, and it yields only a small profit. But the film will eventually tour the country with the orchestra on a soundtrack, and Zoetrope executives predict that it will become the largest grossing foreign film ever released in this country.

Besides his bewildering but charmed track record, Coppola garners his associates' confidence through a mercurial mixture of infectious enthusiasm, devil-may-care flamboyance, pioneer spirit, and perseverance. Director George Lucas (*Star Wars*) has said of his friend, "Francis could sell ice to the Eskimos."

Coppola vigorously defends himself against charges of excess and extravagance. "I feel very sure that the audience wants something that is unusual. As a moviegoer, I really am bored by the large amount of films. The storytelling technique is all the same. When the public gets wind of another kind of approach, it responds. I think that had a lot to do with the success of *Napoleon*, aside from the fact that it's a wonderful movie. It smelled like a different kind of event." He is likewise convinced that, set in a surreal Las Vegas, *One From the Heart* will constitute a different kind of moviegoing experience. "With its polarity of fantasy, glitter, reality, disappointment, and everything turning on the notion of chance, Vegas is the perfect place to set a love story," says Cop-

Coppola working with Marlon Brando on *The Godfather*. The film bought Coppola unbeatable career insurance: "You see," he has said, "I could make five failures, five pictures that nobody liked, and I'd still be the guy who directed *The Godfather*."

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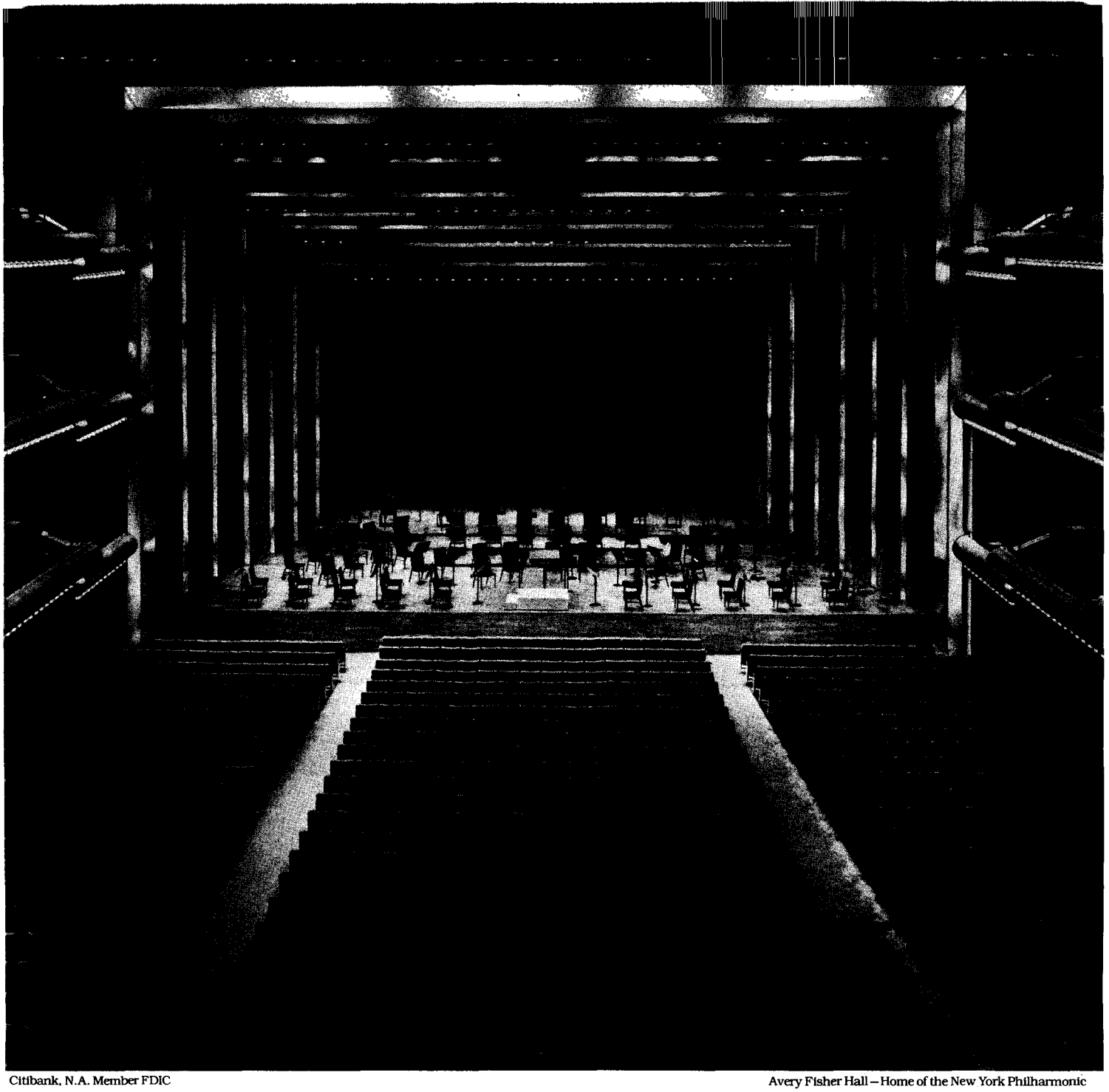

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pola. "The city is a metaphor for the state of love itself. I want the film to *be* the emotions of these people, just like in *Apocalypse Now*, I wanted the film to *be* the war. I wanted you to have a direct experience with the film, which was as though you were having a direct experience with the war. I'm interested in films that *are* what they're *about*."

These days, in what he calls "the middle-aged period of my work," Coppola doesn't resemble the ranting and raving director who dominated reports from the set of *Apocalypse Now*. On this set, the legendary logistical problems of *Apocalypse Now* are a running joke. "I need a helicopter right outside in five minutes!" he shouts to the crew. "To the Philippines!" For *One From the Heart*, Coppola shows up for work in coat and tie—the only suit on the set—and stands around the rehearsal piano with Gene Kelly, the 68-year-old hoofer emeritus of *Singin' in the Rain*, who is overseeing the dance sequences. (Coppola has also installed Michael Powell, the 72-year-old director of *The Thief of Baghdad*, as another senior artist in residence.)

On the set, Coppola's presence is now largely benevolent: Waiting for a camera set-up, he points across the set to a smiling stagehand huddled with a blonde walk-on, dressed as a cocktail waitress. "Who's the guy with the girl on his lap?" Coppola asks a crew supervisor.

"If he's an electrician, he's going to get his pink slip," says the peeved production manager.

"Nah."

"I'm taking care of your money, Francis. You don't want him doing that on your time."

"Leave the guy alone," answers Coppola, and that is what happens.

During the actual filming, Coppola isn't a presence at all. He sits in a silver trailer a hundred feet outside the sound stage, watching the scene on video monitors. Under these conditions, he can adjust and edit each sequence as it is shot—a procedure that he foresees as the future of all filmmaking. On this movie, Coppola is also using a process of "pre-visualization" that allows for action, dialogue, and music to be designed, recorded, and previewed on videotapes before shooting begins. It's Zoetrope's equivalent of the theater's dress rehearsal, designed to eliminate the last-minute complications that plagued *Apocalypse Now*. "During *Apocalypse*, Francis was out there with the typhoons, waiting all day for the light to get right," says Lucy Fisher. "He was literally at the mercy of the elements. So this time he decided he wanted the safety and security of a studio."

From his trailer, Coppola also issues directorial suggestions that are relayed via a loudspeaker for everyone to hear on the casino set. "Try not to anticipate the kiss," he tells Teri Garr as the extras eavesdrop. "And try to appear more happy that he's kissed you, Teri. I know you wish it was me, but *try*."

"If Zoetrope doesn't make it, Francis can work at any studio he wants"—provided he gets more than the $3 million he's paying himself now.

As Zoetrope awaits the autumn releases of *One From the Heart* and *The Escape Artist*, the studio exists in a self-inflicted state of suspended animation. "You know that T.S. Eliot quote?" asks screenwriter Bernstein. "'Between the idea and the reality, between the motion and the act falls the shadow.' Well, at the moment, we're in the shadow." At least one of its two movies must turn out to be a major hit if the studio, as currently conceived, is to continue.

Elsewhere, though, there are indications that aspects of the old-fashioned studio concept are receiving consideration as a result of Zoetrope's presence. Paramount Pictures is planning to establish a new department of contract writers, and several other companies may do likewise. As the cost of filmmaking has spiraled, the financial advantages of dependable talent-at-hand have increased. Pooling creative resources is an increasingly popular notion. Several years ago, Paramount moved its feature-film office from Beverly Hills back onto the studio lot, and chairman Barry Diller believes the effects of such gestures "are not direct, but powerful nonetheless. It has to do with feelings of pride and proximity." It was Coppola who urged Diller to make that move. "You can learn a lot from Zoetrope. I certainly have," he says. Indeed, Paramount has built a new commissary on its lot.

Whether or not Zoetrope can continue as a new-fangled edition of the old-fashioned studio will depend, as does everything on the premises, on Francis Coppola. As chairman of the board *and* chief creative talent, he is the company's principal asset and its principal problem. He is the Godfather of the lot, mobilizing trusting employees and longtime associates to suit his changeable nature—all in the name of the family of art. And he is the Good Father of the lot, shepherding talented minds under one roof—all in the name of the future of art. If Zoetrope survives, it will be because Coppola the director has shared his controlling interest with Coppola the executive. "If Zoetrope doesn't make it, Francis can work at any studio anytime he wants," says one studio head. On the chance that day may come, Francis the administrator has shrewdly paid Francis the artist $3 million to direct *One From the Heart*—a fee that the major studios would have to exceed for his services.

It's particularly appropriate that a compulsive gambler like Coppola should risk the future of his dream by erecting a miniature Vegas on his own property. As he strolls onto the set, among the milling masses—technicians, actors, extras dressed as showgirls and Shriners—he stands unnoticed for a minute in the center of an intersection. Above him, in twinkling lights, is a huge sign that says: "Lady Luck." Over that sign, outlined in neon, is the lady herself, continuously kicking a vengeful leg. In any direction he looks, the glittering signs—Chance, Craps, Double Odds—recall his massive bet. "If we ever had a lot of money," he says, "we could be a very dangerous company." Expert storyteller that he is, Coppola has turned his own career into the best cliffhanger in Hollywood. ■

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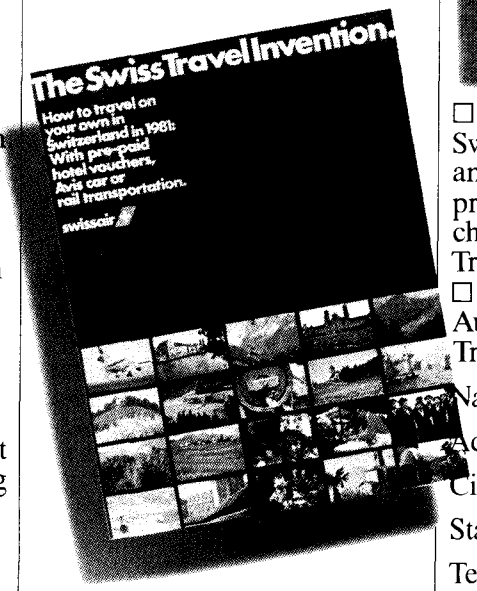
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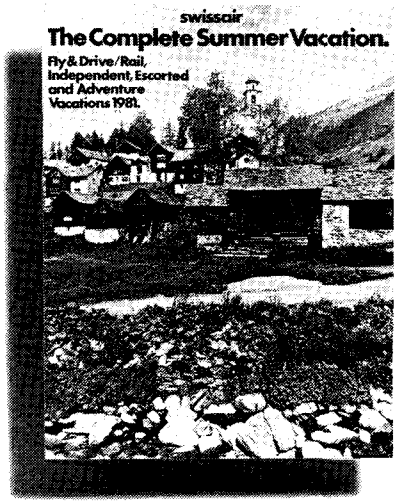

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An Artist's Canny Eye

by Malcolm N. Carter

Claire Zeisler has been nothing if not unconventional in her 77 years. At a time in her life when most people are looking toward retirement, she began her career as a serious artist, and her woven sculptures and fibrous wall hangings have been displayed in prominent museums ever since her first solo show in 1962. The Art Institute of Chicago held a retrospective of her work two years ago.

Meanwhile, she invited the derision of her friends by indulging a passion for dusty old baskets woven by American Indians (worth hundreds of dollars today, some of her containers still bear $20 price tags). Then, though her husband at the time detested the style, Mrs. Zeisler persisted in acquiring paintings by Klee, Picasso, and Mirō. And she had the confidence to pass up a Picasso for a compelling artifact from New Guinea (a stone-carved wooden meat hook) long before it became fashionable to collect primitive art.

The same woman who says as a little girl she hated Europe's great museums, lives in an airy apartment that celebrates art. Hers is a life evidently devoted to art and thus permeated by it. "If you have art," Claire Zeisler allows, "then everything should be subservient to that. I have the feeling you should give your art a good home."

Indeed, her home is more evocative of an art gallery than an apartment. Overlooking Lake Michigan on Chicago's Lake Shore Drive, the Zeisler residence is a virtual showcase for the art. Not only has Mrs. Zeisler had the walls painted stark white and illuminated her collection with length upon length of track lighting, but she has shunned even the distraction of carpeting. When she moved in more than three decades ago, she insisted on having a terrazzo floor installed throughout. Moreover, Mrs. Zeisler has relegated her own creations to obscure corners.

Her collection is catholic, ranging from a huge Mirō ("The Gendarme") that dominates the living room, to an embroidered denim jacket draped over a chair. Visitors are greeted by her collection of baskets on shelves lining an entire wall. Then, like sentries that must be skirted to gain entrance to the living room, come a Nevelson column, a Calder standing mobile, and the New Guinea artifact. A 14-foot-long beaded serpent, crafted by a Turkish prisoner of war in England during World War I, lies coiled on a living room couch. A small Picasso ("Glass") is propped on the coffee table amid a cluster of primitive objects. Not far from "The Black Heart" by Klee rests a fetish in a basket, and a rare mummified hawk acquired in Cairo stands beside that. Oddly, the juxtapositions work: The hawk, for instance, looks less like an omen from the ages than a piece of modern pottery; the strength of the New Guinea meat hook provides an effective counterpart to the Nevelson; and the geometric shapes in the paintings and sculpture seem to echo the patterns woven into the baskets as well as the forms of the primitive objects.

Now a great-grandmother, Claire Zeisler, née Block, was born to money and managed to marry into more of it—twice. From the time she can remember him, her father was in retirement, having made his fortune in the whisky business in Cincinnati. But she found life at home oppressive and married at the first opportunity. "Money to me meant freedom," she says. She was 19 years old. With her bridegroom (Harold Florsheim, as in shoes), she moved to the Chicago suburbs, had three children, and spent the next 18 years primarily as a housewife. But the seeds of her art collecting had already germinated.

She is not sure whether she did it out of boredom or some other motivation, but as Mrs. Florsheim, she redecorated her home six times in the 18 years of her first marriage. Because she had caught some lectures at the Institute of Design of the Illinois Institute of Technology, at one point she had bedroom furniture designed by Moholy-Nagy, a founder of the American Bauhaus. She also had a third-floor aerie set aside as an art studio, where she and a friend who was an illustrator for *Vogue* painted, using live models. She shrugs, "I wasn't very good."

In any case, she was focusing intently on art in the Thirties. She started going to talks by Katharine Kuh, onetime *Saturday Review* critic, and the pair became friends. When Kuh opened an art gallery in Chicago, her friend would

On table, from left: an African cap; a gourd box from the Cameroons; and an African necklace. Clockwise around artist Zeisler: pictures by Victor Brauner, Paul Klee, and Max Ernst.

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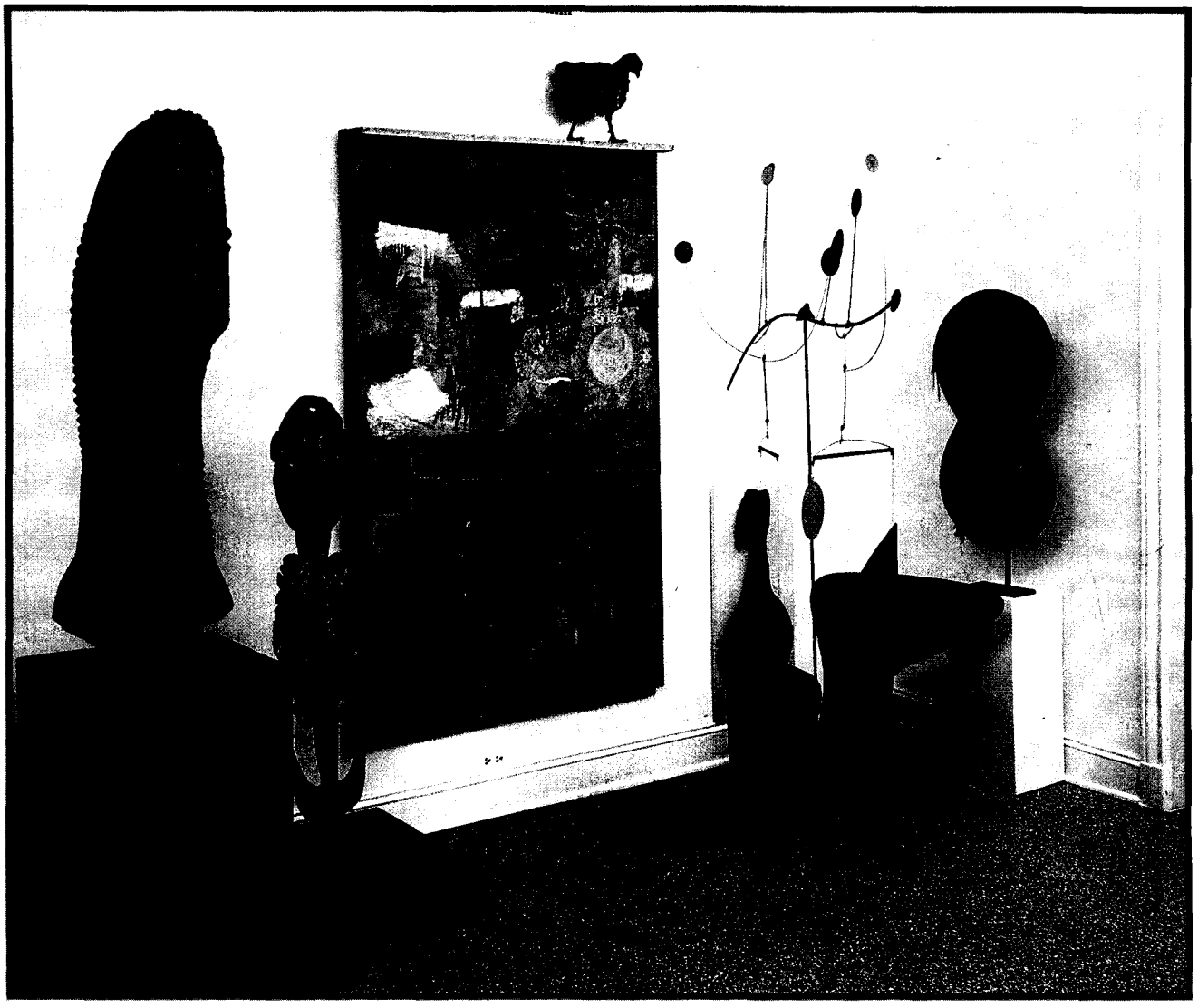
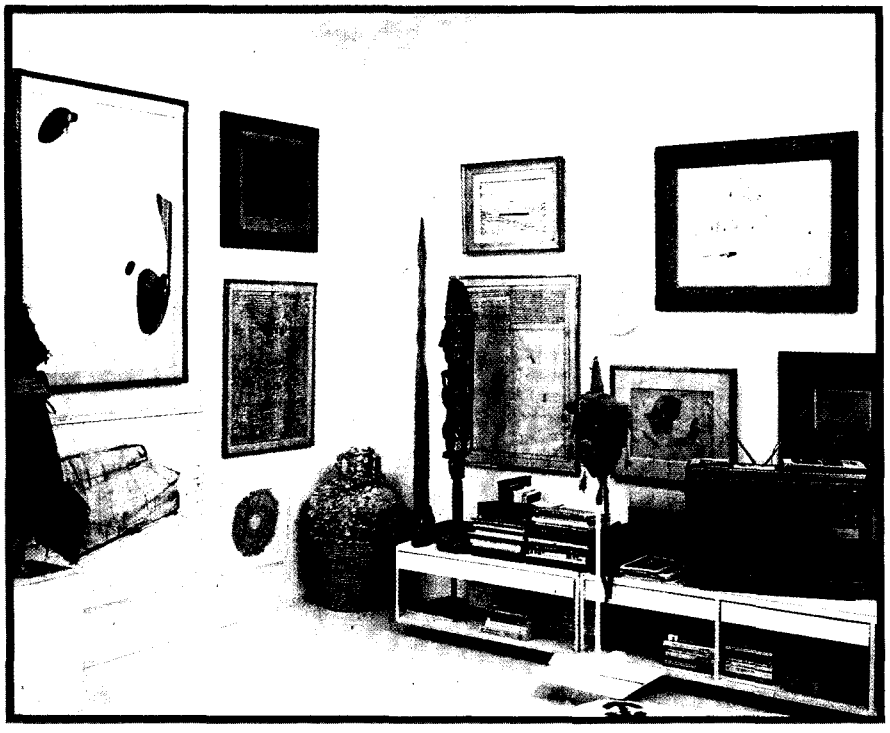


Top (from left): a New Hebrides head; a New Guinea hook; a Rauschenberg painting; a Calder sculpture; a South Pacific shield. Behind the Calder, an object from a New Guinea bridal dowry.



Below: pictures by (top from left) Miró, Albers, Ernst, Gorky; (below from left) Christo, Wiley, two Tantric drawings (one above the Wiley), Wols, Ark. Other objects (from left): a New Hebrides sculpture; a Greco-Roman jug; a Zeisler sculpture; a South Pacific sculpture; a Hopi mask; a Turkish cap.

Opposite: pictures by Picasso, Miró, Klee. Below them (from left), an African sculpture; African masks; an Etruscan pitcher; two Chinese bowls separated by a Cameroons gourd box; an Egyptian mummified hawk; two African fetishes. On table: three African masks.

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PHOTOS BY ALEXAS URBA

stop by afternoons to sip martinis with her and absorb the lessons about art that emerged during the dealer's conversations with patrons. "Her enthusiasm—I caught it," Mrs. Zeisler recollects. "It was like a marvelous breath of fresh air, just marvelous."

Then Mrs. Zeisler took her hesitant first steps as a collector, paying Kuh as little as $1,200 for Klee's "Fleeing Ghosts," which adorns the living room. "I think I was practically her only client," she says. "That's how tough it was. But she was not a hard-seller."

Klee, Miró, and Matisse were still avant-garde, of course: "I fell in love with all those guys, and my husband at that time died over it. He said he couldn't bring his friends home because they would make fun of it." Nonetheless, she had faith in herself and kept buying. Lingering in front of Picasso's "Woman Sewing," Mrs. Zeisler smiles over the difficulty she had acquiring it. "I had such a hard time getting the $5,000 out of my husband," she recalls.

She began frequenting another gallery owned by New York dealer Valentine Dudensing. While he had none of Kuh's influence on her, he could offer the Cubists that the collector preferred. It was on one of her trips to New York that she noticed the New Guinea piece on Dudensing's desk. "He was trying to sell me an expensive Picasso, and I couldn't stand looking at anything but this," Mrs. Zeisler relates, contemplating the meat hook. She bought it for $400, and now scholars make pilgrimages to her apartment to see the artifact. "If I like something," she says, "nobody can move me."

When the renowned Russian sculptor Alexander Archipenko went to Chicago, Katharine Kuh encouraged her friend to take up sculpture. So Mrs. Zeisler, who began sewing as a child and always enjoyed working with her hands, plunged in with characteristic verve. Twice a week she studied with Archipenko, creating small-scale Cubist heads in clay under his tutelage. But soon she became disenchanted: "Everybody copied him, you see, and that's why I gave up." Though he was reputed to be a good teacher as well as a pioneering artist, Mrs. Zeisler adds, "he was a peasant—a very strange man." She gave one of the sculptor's pieces in her collection to her daughter and sold the other. "I wasn't crazy about his work," she explains.

Her first marriage ended in divorce during World War II, and she subsequently moved into her apartment in an enduringly fashionable building with her second husband, a wealthy internist and mathematician whose mother was concert pianist Fannie Blumefield Zeisler. Until his death in 1962 at the age of 62, Ernest Zeisler indulged his wife's collecting—if he didn't precisely encourage it.

The couple was traveling in the Southwest when she acquired her first

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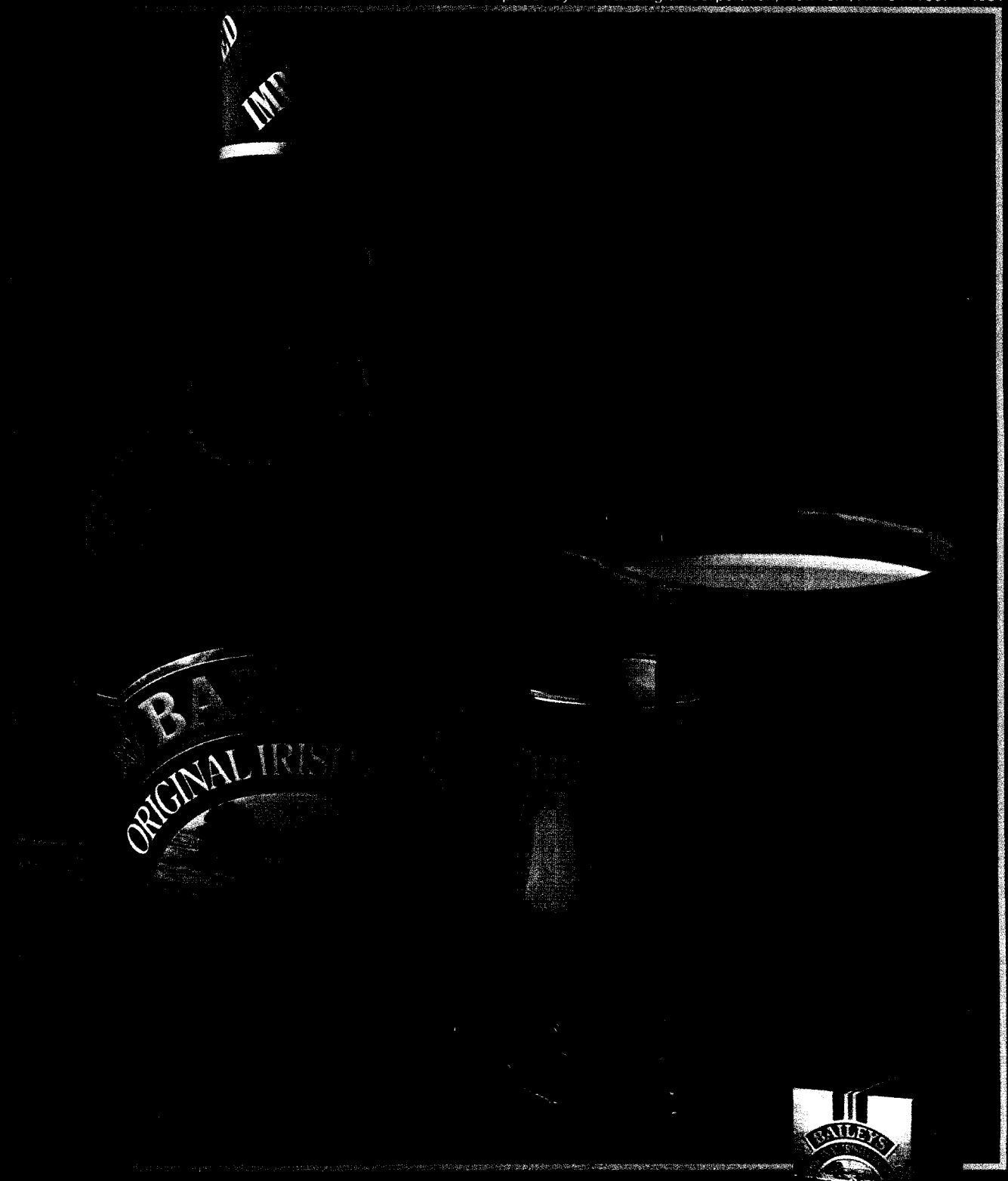

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Indian basket. They had happened into a little shop, and the designs attracted Mrs. Zeisler. "I bought a few," she reflects. "I don't know why I didn't buy them all, dammit." Then the Zeislers traveled the West Coast from Los Angeles to Vancouver one summer, and she especially recalls stopping at an antiques shop in Oakland. "They had about 50 baskets—I took them all," Mrs. Zeisler recounts, laughing over her memory of the merchant's astonishment. "People would come here and say, 'My God, she's crazy! Why would anyone want so many damn baskets?'" She was "passionate" about collecting them, she continues, saying that a reason may have been the importance of weaving in her life.

Certainly, she is no slave to tradition. Buying an artist for his name never attracted her. "What is the most expensive might not appeal to me," she notes. And reading about art bores her, so Mrs. Zeisler cultivated her own eye. "I'm much more visual than I am intellectual," she says. "I'd rather just look." But that doesn't mean that Mrs. Zeisler isn't demanding. Before she buys an artist, she insists on seeing a volume of his or her work. "There's a certain pride in thinking that your eye is that good," she says.

Evidence of her outlook abounds in her apartment. Consider Mrs. Zeisler's study, which doubles as a guest room: While a modern drawing by Artschwager hangs over the bed, an adjacent wall is covered with everything from beads to African masks and representations of the collector's own works. There are enough examples of Tantric art sculptures and assorted *objets* to distract the most bedeviled insomniac.

Individuals who collect art merely to decorate may be tempted to leave their own chambers practically bare, but collectors who are in love with art must live with it everywhere. Claire Zeisler is such a collector, though she self-deprecatingly disdains the term in favor of "pack-rat." At the foot of her bed stands an intricately carved ancestral figure from New Ireland in the South Pacific, while a lozenge-shaped sculpture by Craig Kauffman hovers over her headboard. The walls are covered with paintings and drawings, including "Wrapped Couch" by Christo. There are a Tibetan lama coat, a mask from the New Hebrides, and a collection of ivory, coral, and turquoise jewelry from assorted primitive peoples.

Like any collector, Mrs. Zeisler has surrendered some art to acquire better art. The purged pieces may be unexceptional, but collectors often feel as if they've parted with a loved one. Mrs. Zeisler is no different in that respect. She speaks of having to exchange a small Miró watercolor that she "wasn't too crazy about" for the Calder, "The Black Tulip." Then she confesses, "I'm sorry I gave any of it up." Still the joy over the new acquisition tends to blunt any regret. To obtain "The Gendarme" she had to give up two or three Matisse watercolors and a Picasso; "I thought it was a rather weak Picasso," she says, her eyes riveted on the Miró.

Although Mrs. Zeisler regularly travels to New York to visit galleries and often stops in Chicago's galleries ("rather disappointing lately"), she has become less devoted to collecting than to determining how to dispose of everything ultimately. She intends to leave her basket collection to a small museum outside Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the belief that such an institution can benefit from its depth. A painting by Franz Kline and Rauschenberg's "Constellation" may end up at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, but Mrs. Zeisler remains undecided about the balance of her collection. Given its value, there can be no end of hopeful beneficiaries. ■

Malcolm N. Carter, a staff writer at *Money* magazine, writes regularly about the arts.

Claire Zeisler's Indian basket collection, framed by a ceremonial sculpture from New Guinea (left) and a war club from New Caledonia. On the chair: a male African's loin cloth made of cowry shells, and an ornately embroidered motorcyclist's jacket.

ALEXAS URBA

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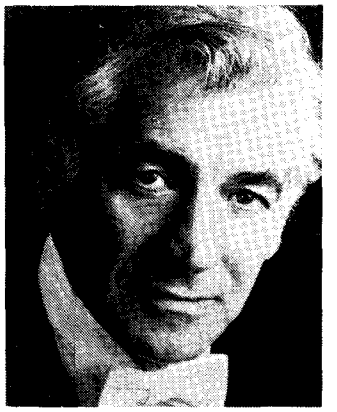

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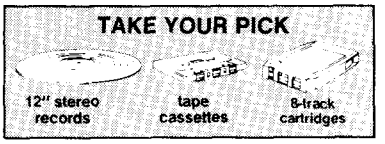

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Robert Penn Warren

by Carll Tucker

"What is man," wrote Robert Penn Warren, "but his passion?" Warren's passion, in a career that has spanned five decades, has been to write 10 novels, 13 collections of poetry, eight books on nonfiction and criticism, one play, and two ground-breaking textbooks. For years he was a revered professor at Yale until his retirement in 1973. He has won every prize Americans have to bestow: three Pulitzers (one for his novel, All the King's Men, *two for collections of poems), the Bollingen Prize for Poetry, the National Medal for Literature, the Medal of Freedom (the nation's highest civilian award), and last May a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Prize, financially the world's largest single award to an individual.*

Born in Guthrie, Kentucky, in 1905, Warren lives today with his wife, author Eleanor Clark, in their homes in Fairfield, Connecticut, and West Wardsboro, Vermont. For a man so honored, Warren's humility is remarkable. Genial, generous, candid, he strives in his conversation as in his works, for the exact phrase, often testing several aloud for the one that conveys his exact meaning.

We spoke to Warren on a radiant spring afternoon, in the living room of his home in Fairfield. He had spent the morning, as he and his wife spend every morning from 9 to 2, in their respective studies, working.

SR *Why do you write?*

WARREN Why do you scratch when it itches? It's a compulsion. It's an irritation. I know a thousand stories, everybody knows a thousand stories. But only one cockleburr catches in your fur and that subject is your question. You live with that question. You may not even know what that question is. It hangs around a long time. I've carried a novel as long as 20 years. And some poems longer than that. Sometimes a line will hang around for years.

I started writing *Audubon* back in 1940. I threw it away as no good entirely. It *was* no good. I was stuck with some narrative sense in it, but it had no narrative sense, except a biographical one. And then one morning when I was helping to make a bed—I rebuke myself now for it (you see, I'm very poorly housebroken)—well, I was holding one side of the sheet and I suddenly remembered one line from the version I had written 20 years before: "Was not the lost Dauphin: was only" and that became the first line of the new poem.

SR *Where was that line in the original poem?*

WARREN I never went back and looked. I just suddenly saw the thing in a series of shots on Audubon. Nothing like a narrative. Later, I sent a copy to [the noted critic and teacher] I.A. Richards. And Richards didn't answer after about two or three weeks, which is not too unusual, because he was slow about answering letters. But I saw him at a cocktail party in Cambridge, at a friend's house, and he called me to one side and said, "I want to talk to you." He said, "I like the poem very much. I think it's fine...." Said some nice things about it. Then he said, "But you know, it needs a lyric touch." You see, the lyric pieces were not in there then. And he said, "Go think about that." And I did. At the moment it didn't connect with me. But in a matter of 10 days, two weeks, I wrote the little lyric pieces and inserted them.

SR *How many other people have persuaded you to change your work because of their criticism?*

WARREN Well, a lot of people said, "Throw it away." And I've thrown it away [*laughs*]. Chiefly Albert Erskine, my editor at Random House. But I trust him very much on that—more on the negative than the positive. But that has changed, I think, over the years. In my youth, in Vanderbilt College days and for some time after, poetry was a communal thing, more or less. There was a constant interplay of minds and sensibilities. But that disappears as you get older. Older people don't show each other poems. I'm more interested in the younger people and the few that I can suborn into reading my things.

SR *You once observed that Dreiser was always writing for somebody, a schoolteacher who had encouraged him. Is there anybody in your life who played that role?*

WARREN Oh, quite a lot. There's my father. He was a ferocious reader, read everything, and he learned quite a lot about foreign languages. He was an intellectual who was more or less a failure as a businessman. He ran a small bank in a small town, and it failed. He had wanted to be a poet. When I was a boy of 12, I found a big black book hidden away in the library—*The Poets of America*. And I happened to open it to a picture of him with a lot of others, across from the title page.

SR *You'd never known he had written poetry?*

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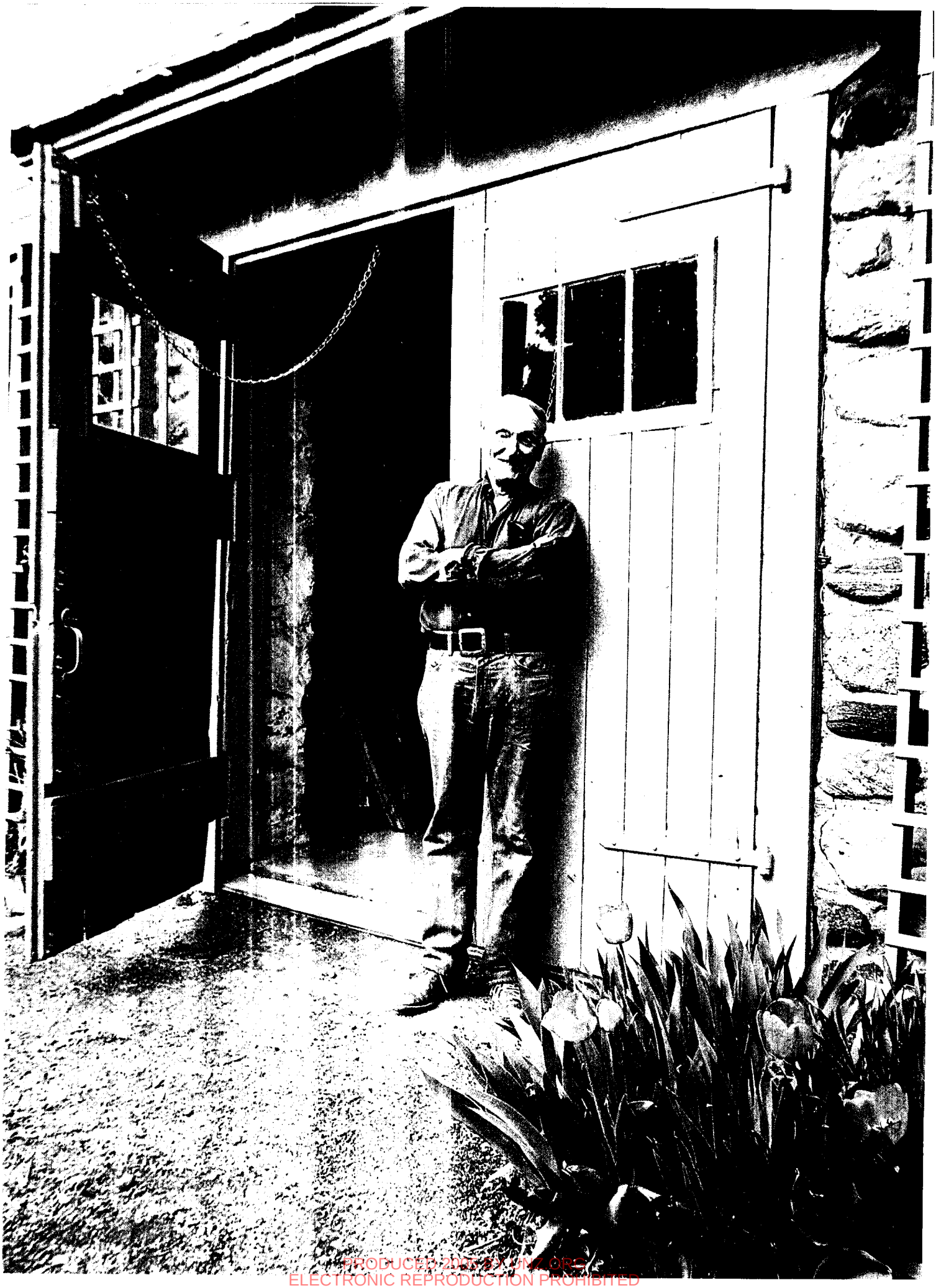

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WARREN No. He'd never mentioned it. Then he came home from the bank in the middle of the afternoon, and I showed him the book. On his face was great surprise and puzzlement and all kinds of furious emotions about it. And he said, "Give me that book" in a very cold, distant way and walked away with it. I began to think it was a dream or something I'd made up in my mind. Years later, I told a scholar in American literature about it. And he said, "Well, that doesn't sound like a dream. It sounds like something that's true." Six months later he sent me a photostat of the pages.

SR *Do you feel you're fulfilling your father's dream?*

WARREN No, it's more like I have stolen my father's life. I have a mystical guilt about that. About having stolen the life the other man wanted. He once said to me: "You know the secret of life? Learn to take joy in your obligations."

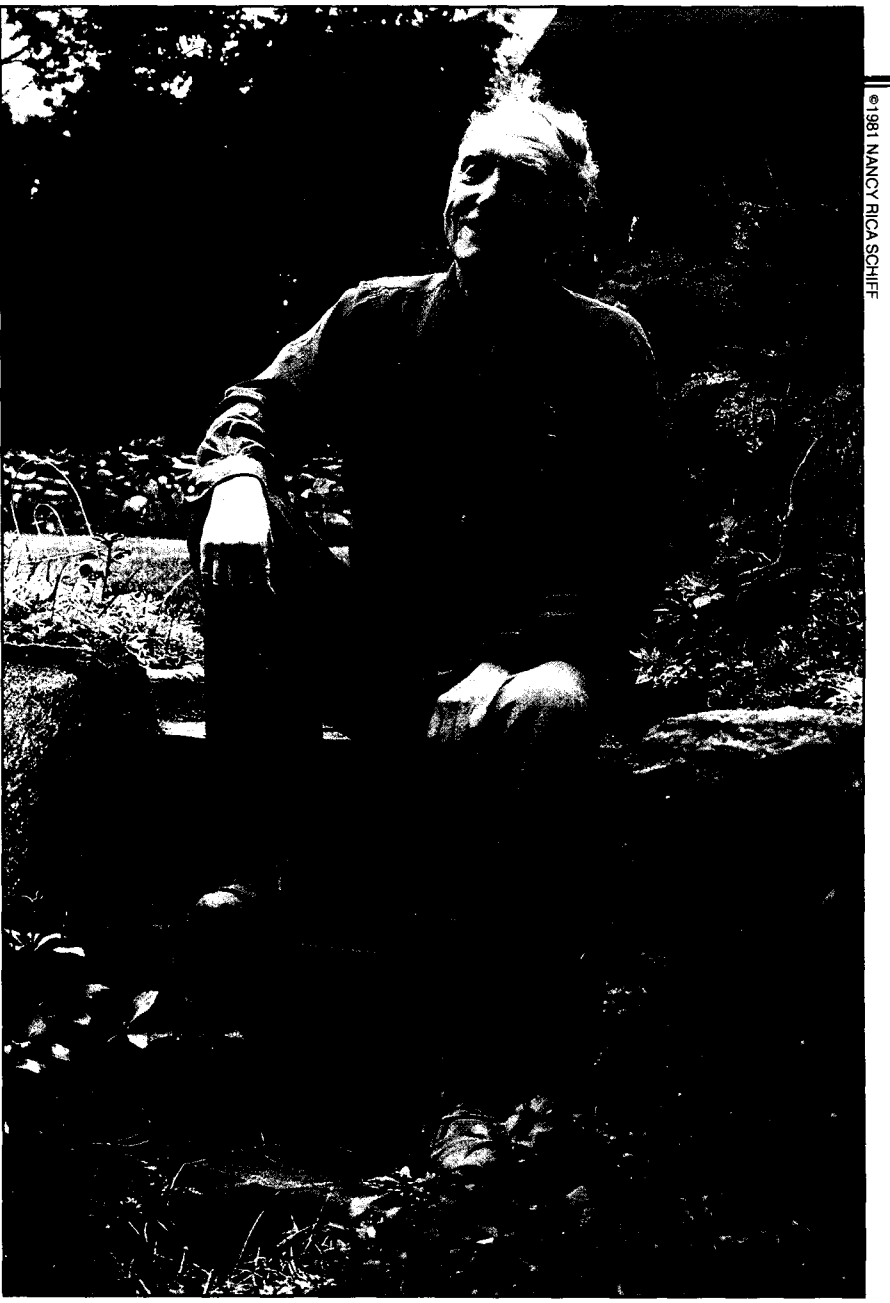
SR *Who else besides your father influenced you to become a writer?*

WARREN Well, my maternal grandfather was really more of a father to me than my own father was because I knew him better when I was a small boy. I spent all my summers with him. He quoted poetry all the time. And I'd read poetry to him, when his eyes gave out in his upper 70s. He was also full of military interests. He was a captain during the Civil War in Forrest's cavalry. He'd sketch out battle tactics in the sand with his walking stick. He was an interesting old character who had time for a boy.

SR *Did you always dream of being a poet?*

WARREN No. I wanted to be a naval officer. I was also a boy naturalist, always in the woods. I wouldn't see a white boy for a month at a time in the summers. But the poem that really hit me was "Lycidas." I became totally fascinated by it. I was 13 and I couldn't come to grips with it. It was a struggle.

SR *The list of poets who are also novelists and novelists who are also poets isn't very long. What is the difference between the poetic and the novelistic impulse?*



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WARREN Well, I'm up against that now with something I'm working on. The novel is a documentary of a kind; a poem is not. The novel is an account of a long trailing. A poem is aiming for the one-shot kill.

Let me tell you what I'm doing now. Years ago, 1935, I was visiting a friend of mine in Montana and he told me all about Chief Joseph and showed me where he'd fought. So I began to read Chief Joseph. I guess I've read everything there is about him except one book that's always checked out of the library. And I've seen dozens of pictures of him. And I found out a lot about the Northwest Indians, and so forth. Well, this was hanging around: I didn't know whether it was a novel or a poem or what the hell it was, all these years now since '35. Then, about three years ago I made some false starts—not any more than just thinking about it, notes. But it was all wrong. I just couldn't write an *Indian* novel, you know. But the poem suddenly came. As of last night, I finished typing the fourth draft of it.

SR *Is it a long poem?*

WARREN It will be a book-length poem like *Audubon*. But it could have been a novel. That's where the impulses were all tangled.

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SR *Do you work differently now from the way you worked 25 years ago?*

WARREN Well, at one time having children makes a big difference. I used to work late. From 9 or 9:30 at night till two or three or four o'clock in the morning. But that doesn't go with a family life. Now I work in the mornings—every morning until lunch. And I still do a lot of composing outdoors. Walking or swimming. I used to run a lot. . . on gymnasium tracks. Ideas come to me when I'm relaxed. Poems in particular. I compose them in my head, memorize them, then I write them down.

SR *Every author has his geographical boundaries. How would you characterize the Warren landscape?*

WARREN Quite different in prose and poetry. I can't conceive of myself writing a novel and not laying it in parts of the South. You see, if I hadn't lived there I wouldn't know what they ate for breakfast. I wouldn't feel at home. Now, poetry is a different kind of thing. I've written poetry about Crete and the Aegean and lots about Italy and France and the Mediterranean islands and Kentucky and Vermont and the Far West—places that I've been. But your transaction is different then. *You* are dealing with that as it's being presented to you; you are apart from it. I just don't feel that need to tie myself with the poems in the same way.

SR *Do you see much of a connection between you and your protagonists?*

WARREN No, I don't. I can see certain similarities. But they are all different. Quite a few reviewers said my last novel [*A Place to Come To*] was an autobiographical novel. Well, it certainly was not. I didn't leave the South because I hated it at all. I lost my job [*laughs*]. I was fired twice down there. And my mother didn't write English like that. And my father didn't get killed by a mule's kicking him either. He died at 86 of a cancer he didn't tell anybody he had—an iron man. I tell you, that book's not even in any kind of a strange, twisted way autobiographical. Except one thing I've noticed about many Southerners who've left the South—people I knew, my generation or just a little bit earlier, a little bit later. They felt some kind of awful degradation about being a Southerner. Some of those people came north—some of them made terrific successes in business or elsewhere.

One I knew came to see me. I hadn't seen him since he and I were freshmen. But there wasn't enough action for him at Vanderbilt, so he went to Chicago. I never heard of him again until years later I was a professor at the University of Minnesota, living in a hotel. And the hotel called up and said there's a man here named so-and-so would like to speak to you. And he got on the phone and said, "May I come see you?" I said, "Sure" because I remembered him. And he came in, he was a gigantic wreck of a man—handsome and falling to pieces—he smelled of money in a way which is hard to believe. You know, he had really made it. And he came and he opened his briefcase and he showed me his house in Chicago, a great mansion, you see. And he showed me his summer place and a dock and a yacht and motorboats. Then he showed me a debutante party picture of his two daughters, and so forth. And he's showing me all these trophies. After years and years I hadn't seen him or heard his name. . . .

I have stolen the life my father wanted. I have a mystical guilt about that.

SR *Trying to justify himself to himself.*

WARREN Yes, and then, after showing me everything and taking congratulations and all that, suddenly he threw his head up—we'd had two or three drinks together—and he put his head in his hands and said, "Jesus, I'm lonelier than God." And that was the germ of my novel, this man who had made his kind of success and had no return.

SR *If somebody were putting together a small library ship-bound for posterity, which of your books would you like to see included?*

WARREN I would say my three best novels, right offhand, would be *All the King's Men*, *World Enough and Time*, and the last one.

But poems? I'd have to draw individual poems out of collections. I think that the last book is one of my best books. And *Brother to Dragons* is a book I'm sort of attached to. Maybe *Audubon.*

SR *Perhaps the most characteristic and distressing disease of American writers is that they tend to dry up or fall apart after early success. Yet you have managed to keep producing—and growing—into your seventies.*

WARREN I haven't any theories on why that is. We don't know what goes on in our own physiology, you know. Maybe it's that I lead a very active life. I'm outdoors a lot and I do a lot of physical work and physical activity. And I've certainly cut down on my drinking in the last few years. And I have seriously tried to stay outside the official literary life. I mean, I just haven't got caught in that world of literary parties. That's why I like to live in the country. To be alone a lot.

SR *At age 75, are you conscious of writing from an unusual vantage point?*

WARREN Well, you are bound to be. This last book of poems was the book of an older man. It's kind of an autobiography. You're bound to be concerned with whatever meaning your life could have had, as you get older. That is clearly in the books, I think. And it's clearly in my new poem about Chief Joseph.

SR *Are there any other RPW novels waiting to be born?*

WARREN Well, I'm not saying no. But when you get to a certain age, you're aware of the time it takes to write a novel—two years in prison—if you'll ever finish. But who knows? Tomorrow I may wake up and feel like starting one. You never can tell. ■

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Is Business the Arts' White Knight?

by Nathan Johnson

Rodin's "St. John the Baptist Preaching" (1878), from the National Gallery of Art's current exhibition, "Rodin Rediscovered," sponsored by IBM.

During recent congressional testimony over the administration's proposal to reduce federal appropriations to the arts by 50 percent, ballet choreographer Eliot Feld told a House subcommittee he had read that it would cost $1 million per foot to build a new 300-foot nuclear submarine. Therefore, he said, "If one of those subs were only 295 feet long, support for the dance would remain at the present level. Or, to put it another way, if your entire fleet, instead of being 133,200 inches long, would be 133,140 inches, it wouldn't make any difference because they'd look larger when submerged anyway. All of which is to say, what we're doing [in ballet] can't be measured in inches."

The comment drew an appreciative response from like-minded artists and entertainers in the audience, but it failed to sway administration supporters. Retorted Congressman Ted Loeffler (R-Tex.), "If you joined the Navy, you could dance all over the world for nothing."

Whatever the social cost of the proposed federal cutback, intelligent dialogue already appears to be a casualty of the public skirmishing. In the opinion of many corporate contributors, the focus should not be on trying to score debater's points or on unyielding opposition to budget cuts, but on serious discussion of how the arts can survive a defense-minded administration in an era of economic austerity. "We're in sympathy with the arts organizations, but we believe inflation is their worst enemy," says Stephen S. Halsey, president of the American Express Foundation. "Utilities, staffing, and rents are all driven up by inflation, so it's in everybody's interest to get it down. That's why Reagan was elected."

At the same time, while almost no one thinks the arts will escape the budget ax completely, a growing number of businessmen appear unconvinced that financial disaster is imminent. While many corporate executives deny publicly that business can or will fill the void resulting from the proposed cutback of the current $159 million federal arts budget to $88 million, a surprising number of them admit confidentially that they expect corporate America eventually to pick up most or all of the slack.

Even corporate officials who do not put it quite that strongly think that business will play a significantly increased role. "Corporations will have to do more and will want to do more," says Connie Brennan, manager of corporate contributions at Boise Cascade. "You can be pretty sure that more corporate dollars will be channeled into the arts."

Alice Zimet, contributions officer of Chase Manhattan Bank, which gives about $6.5 million a year in philanthropic contributions (some 1.8 percent of after-tax earnings), says, "Our contribution has been going up by one-tenth of 1 percent since 1979. We're trying to reach the 2 percent level by 1983."

Edward M. Block, president of the American Council for the Arts, told the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee that a year-to-year reduction of 50

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percent in the NEA budget "is unlikely to be offset by private benefactors, with corporations presumably absorbing the lion's share of the shortfall." Cuts of that magnitude would not likely be made up by the private sector, he told *Saturday Review*, and certainly not in fiscal 1982.

"But over time, I would be willing to concede that properly organized and sold, the private sector could make up most of the cuts," he says. He also notes that AT&T, of which he is a vice-president, has steadily increased its outlays for arts from 5 percent of its total contributions budget six years ago to 12 percent currently. "We want to move it still higher," says Block, who devised AT&T's Orchestras on Tour program. "Over the near term I'd like to get it to 15 percent."

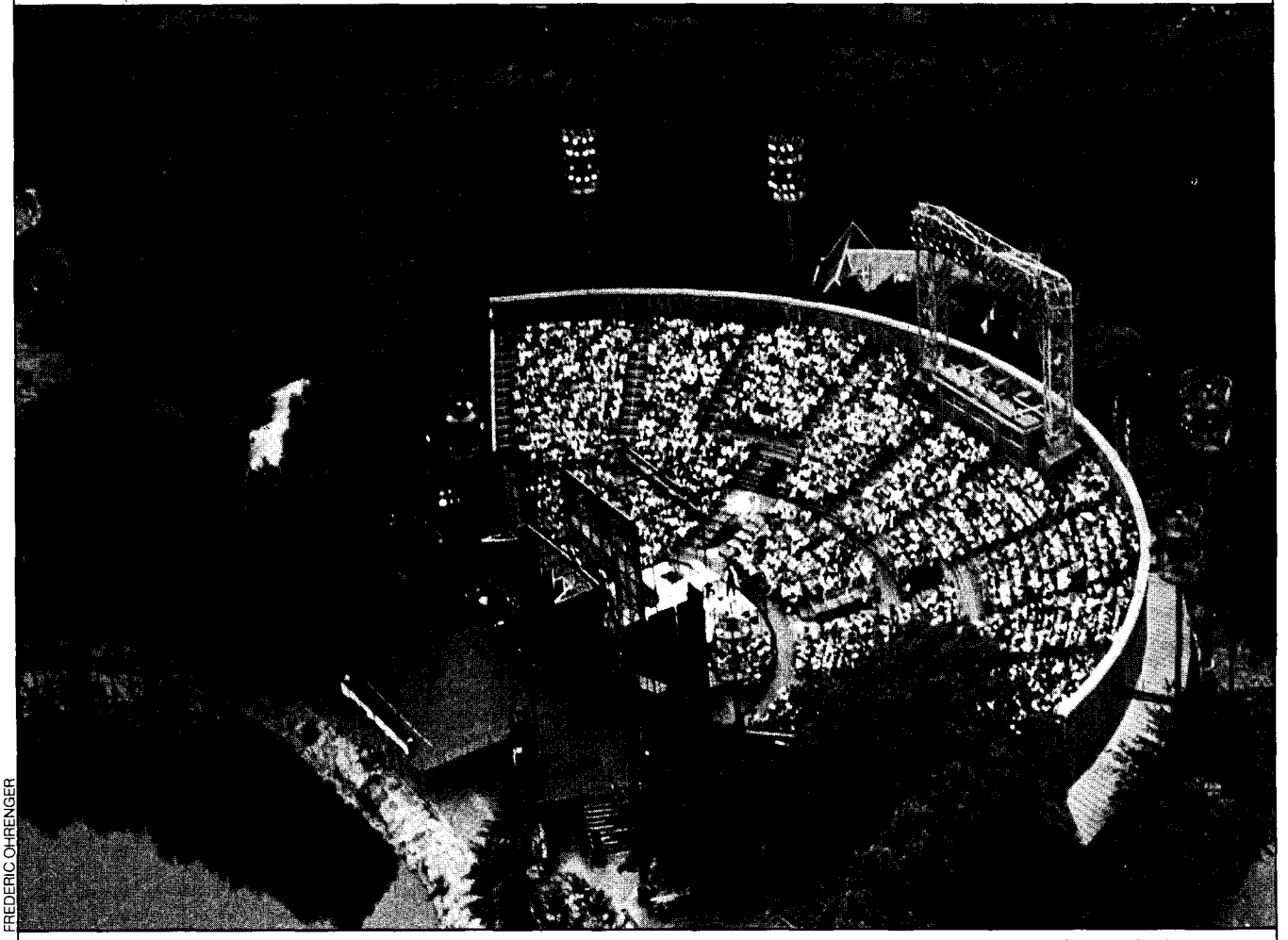
Other corporations have also been increasing their arts outlays. "I know our corporate contributions for the arts have been rising steadily," says Sandra Ruch, manager of Mobil Corporation's cultural programs and promotions. "During the past few months we bought 217 hours of broadcast time on television, most of it public television, to begin airing in January of 1982."

Mobil, a multimillion-dollar contributor to public television, might appear to be an exception because its chairman, Rawleigh Warner, Jr., is also chairman of the Business Committee for the Arts. But Edward M. Strauss, Jr., president of the committee, says that business support of the arts from 1967 to 1979 grew by 54 percent in constant dollars (dollars adjusted for inflation), and will continue to grow if there is no serious economic downturn. "But even in the recessions of 1969-70 and 1973-74, those contributions continued to grow," he adds.

"Business already gives three times more to the arts than the NEA does."

That is no doubt because more and more companies view arts contributions as an investment important in bad as well as prosperous economic times. Departmental budgets were reduced 6 percent at Manufacturers Hanover this year, according to Patsy Warner, an assistant vice-president who runs special events in the marketing department. "But we were very careful to salvage all the dollars where we could for the arts," she points out. Paul H. Elicker, chairman of SCM, has consistently defended his company's support for the arts as a sound business investment rather than an act of charity.

Many in the business community lament that the public is confused about Washing-



FREDERIC OHRENGER

Citicorp helps underwrite the cost of free summertime performances of Shakespeare in New York City's Central Park.

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This month, Mobil Corporation is sponsoring the first U.S. tour of aboriginal Australian artists, dancers, and musicians.

ton's role in the arts. "The impression is that the National Endowment and the federal government are Big Daddy, when they're not," says Strauss. "They play an important role, but business is already giving three times more to the arts than the NEA." By his estimate, business gave $436 million to the arts during 1979-80, compared with an NEA budget of $154 million.

Mobil officials have a similar view. A recent company advertisement in the *New York Times* and elsewhere noted that *Uncle Sam contributes just over 2 percent* of all the dollars contributed to the arts, "which is why halving the NEA's budget doesn't mean starving artists on half rations; it means only about two pennies out of each dollar for the arts."

But of course the argument involving the Endowment is not solely about money. Leonard Fleischer, senior adviser to Exxon's arts programs, regards the Endowment process as a kind of peer review valuable for corporations that are inadequately equipped to judge the worth of particular arts projects. "I'm also concerned that state legislators will figure that if the arts are given low-level priority by the federal government, why should they be concerned." Still, he adds, "before there was an Endowment there were artists writing novels, painting pictures, and dancing ballet."

Almost no business executive fears for the financial health of Lincoln or Kennedy centers, for example, but many worry that the burden of federal budget cuts will fall disproportionately on experimental and avant-garde organizations. Edward Block expresses another concern: "Since corporations focus their philanthropy largely in communities where they have plants, the smaller arts organizations located where there are no large corporate benefactors are likely to have one devil of a time."

Federal law allows corporations to *deduct contributions up to 5 percent of* their net profits before taxes, but, on average, corporate giving amounts to slightly less than 1 percent of corporate profits. The reason for not taking the full allowance, explains Stephen Halsey, is that corporations are responsible to several constituencies, including stockholders and employees.

Yet the biggest problem is not that donor companies don't contribute enough to the arts. The problem according to Sandra Ruch is, "Almost half of the money that's given comes from just about 1 percent of American companies, and some of the Fortune 500 companies don't give a thing." Adds Frank A. Saunders, a vice-president of Philip Morris (whose ads proclaim "It takes art to make a company great"), "The companies that give tend to be pretty generous, but that's a very small part of the corporate world." That is why Gene Wilson, executive director of the Atlantic Richfield Foundation (which gave $5.7 million to the arts and humanities last year), says, "Arts organizations have to be encouraged to go after the corporations that contribute very little or not at all."

In the arts as in life, however, money is not everything. Consequently, even businessmen who insist that corporations will not pick up the funding shortfall think that they can make valuable contributions to art in other ways. "Given the country's *economic situation, I don't see the likelihood of* a dramatic increase in corporation funding for the arts," says John Keaveney, a vice-president of the Xerox Foundation. "But there could be a substantial increase in business people raising money for arts groups, helping with financial management, helping them to run their businesses. Maybe more companies will make executives available to help out."

Some have already done so, of course. The six-year-old program of the Skills/Services/Resources Bank of the Arts and Business Council was established for that very purpose, and so far more than 150 executive volunteers have cooperated in raising some $1 million for hundreds of arts groups and in teaching important management skills. But even that represents only a fraction of the assistance potentially available.

Another potential source of help, ac-

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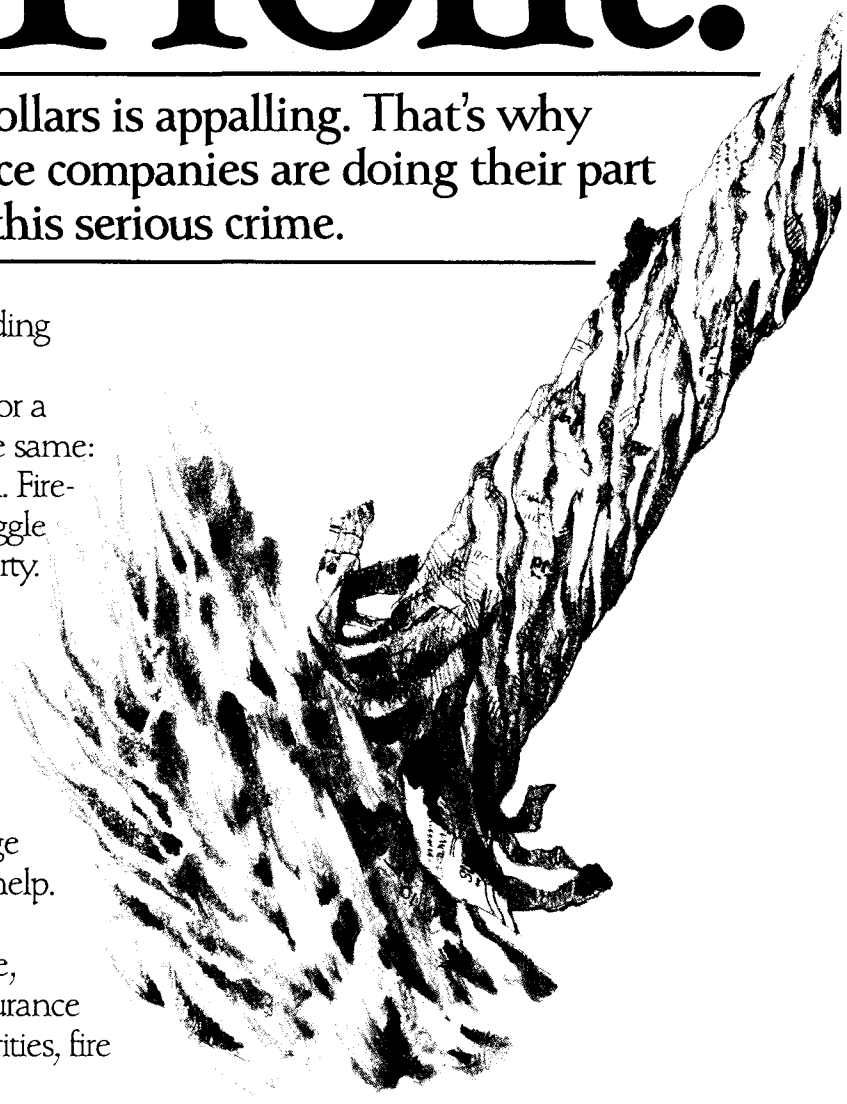
The cost in lives and dollars is appalling. That's why Property-Casualty insurance companies are doing their part to reduce this serious crime.



We've all seen the headlines: "Building gutted by fire. 28 dead, scores injured."

Whether it's a quiet nursing home or a bustling hotel, the scenario is basically the same: A fire starts and suddenly is out of control. Firemen and related emergency services struggle desperately to rescue lives and save property.

The smoke clears and the fire marshal makes his report. Too often it includes the word: *arson.*

Arson *for profit* is only a small part of the total arson problem. Most fires are *not* set for profit. The largest percentage of arson fires is caused by vandals, revenge seekers, or people in need of psychiatric help.

Arson has become a serious social problem. Its solutions demand innovative, coordinated efforts—not only by the insurance business, but by law enforcement authorities, fire inspectors, builders,and legislators.

Property-Casualty insurance companies—acting through the Insurance Committee for Arson Control—help and encourage those important groups to get together. So far, 125 Arson Task Forces have been formed in 41 states.

Meanwhile, insurance companies themselves have been working to reduce the incidence of arson. A prime example, one aimed specifically at arson for profit, is the Property Insurance Loss Register.

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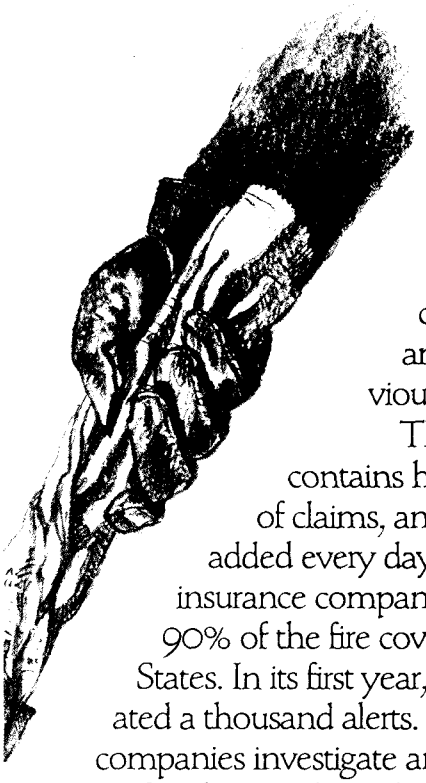


This computerized cross-index of fire claims over $500 is programmed to react whenever a "match-up" of similar characteristics occurs among current and previous claims.

The PILR computer contains hundreds of thousands of claims, and hundreds more are added every day. They come from the insurance companies that write about 90% of the fire coverage in the United States. In its first year, the Register generated a thousand alerts. From them, insurance companies investigate and uncover arson for profit schemes that otherwise would remain undetected.

These leads are essential, because arson often is hard to spot and even harder to prove. It takes time to investigate suspicious fires; to sift rubble for clues to physical evidence, much of which may have been burned up; to probe for financial circumstances which would indicate motive.

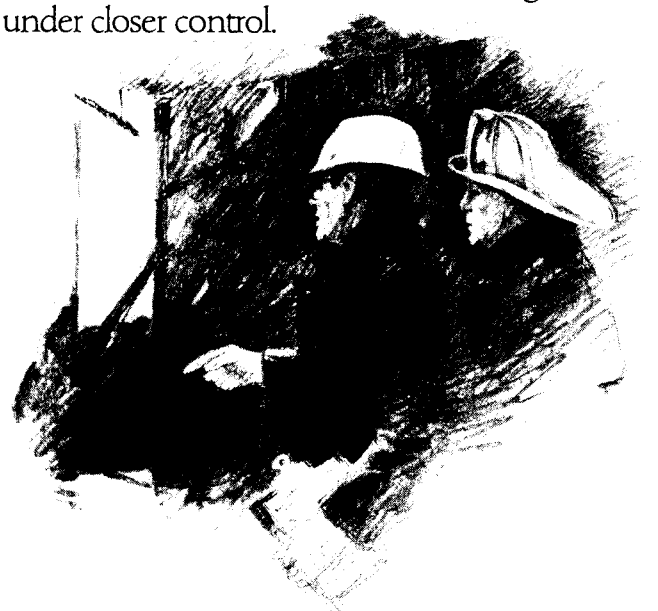
Meanwhile, well-intentioned state laws frequently require prompt claims settlement or notice of reason for delay. Other laws have prevented law enforcement officials and insurers from sharing information about a claim. And, insurance investigators face lawsuits for libel, slander, or bad faith if their claim denial or charge of suspected arson doesn't stand up in court.

All this has had a chilling effect on investigation of possible fraudulent insurance claims.

But Property-Casualty insurance companies are fighting back. They sponsor fire fraud workshops around the country to train thousands of adjusters and claims people. They seek law changes which will remove incentives for arson and make arson easier to investigate, while protecting the privacy of the policyholder. They are testing an insurance application form designed to identify and deter potential arson fraud. They developed a model code which makes arson a serious felony and provides appropriate penalties.

Significant operational changes in the many FAIR Plans across the country (where Property-Casualty insurance companies maintain facilities to insure high risk properties) are also making it harder for arsonists to prosper. Inspection practices and underwriting procedures are stronger. Increasingly, claims for fires of a suspicious nature are resisted. New government guidelines give FAIR Plans more flexibility in denying applications and in cancelling insurance coverage. Property owners are threatened with loss of coverage unless unsafe conditions are corrected.

Clearly, progress is being made. Society may never be able to eliminate arson, any more than it can eliminate any other serious crime. However, through increased public concern, improved legislation, training, and the growing level of cooperation among community groups, insurance companies, fire fighters, and law enforcement authorities, we believe the crime of arson can be brought under closer control.



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A 16th-century engraving of a print shop from "Shakespeare, the Globe and the World," a touring exhibit supported by Exxon.

cording to some executives, is matching funds. An estimated 850 or so corporations currently match employee gifts to nonprofit agencies, and many are in the process of expanding that benefit to include the arts. Among them is International Paper Company. "We view it as a good step in encouraging individual philanthropy, in a sense the kind of thing the administration seems to be encouraging," says Gladys S. Waltemade, vice-president of the International Paper Company Foundation. International Paper is also considering ways to encourage employee involvement in community services.

A major reason corporations are likely to loosen their purse strings, despite insistence that they have no intention of doing so, is that while such contributions seemingly contradict the notion that the business of business is business, they square with corporate America's view about government generally. "The principal alternative to private philanthropy is government funding," said a recent position paper of the Business Roundtable, which called for greater corporate support to cultural and social programs. "The sources of government funds, it must be emphasized, are tax-paying individuals and business enterprise. It is in everyone's self-interest to support society through private social investments rather than through the complex and costly redistribution of tax dollars by government."

Bob McCabe, an official at the General Motors Foundation, feels that corporations will be unable to make up the kinds of federal cutbacks that are under discussion. "But government is not an efficient redistributor of dollars to organizations—there are so many strings and so much bureaucracy," he says. "Maybe you wouldn't need the same level of giving if you had corporate involvement in the allocation of dollars, because you would probably get better policing or evaluation."

"Halving the NEA budget means only about 2¢ out of each arts dollar."

That view is widespread through the corporate world. "When I talk to people from arts organizations, they're delighted to have government money but they also find it time-consuming and expensive," says Connie Brennan. "Some of the younger groups spend more time worrying about how to get the money than what to do with it afterward. There's less risk of that happening with corporate funding, because companies generally assess where you are likely to be in four or five years before they support a program."

The Reagan administration strongly shares these views—which is one reason it is reportedly thinking about replacing the National Endowments with an independent agency, similar to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, that would rely heavily on private support for the arts.

Yet businessmen caution that even greatly increased corporate funds will not be given to just any arts organization that comes along. An official of a large corporation that contributes generously to the arts says, "Corporations have a lot of problems, but one of them is not lack of opportunities to give away money. But too often arts people come around begging alms for the poor struggling arts programs. They don't understand that corporations are under no obligation to give away money, and they don't understand that saying 'Reagan cut the budget 50 percent so help us,' is a lot like saying,

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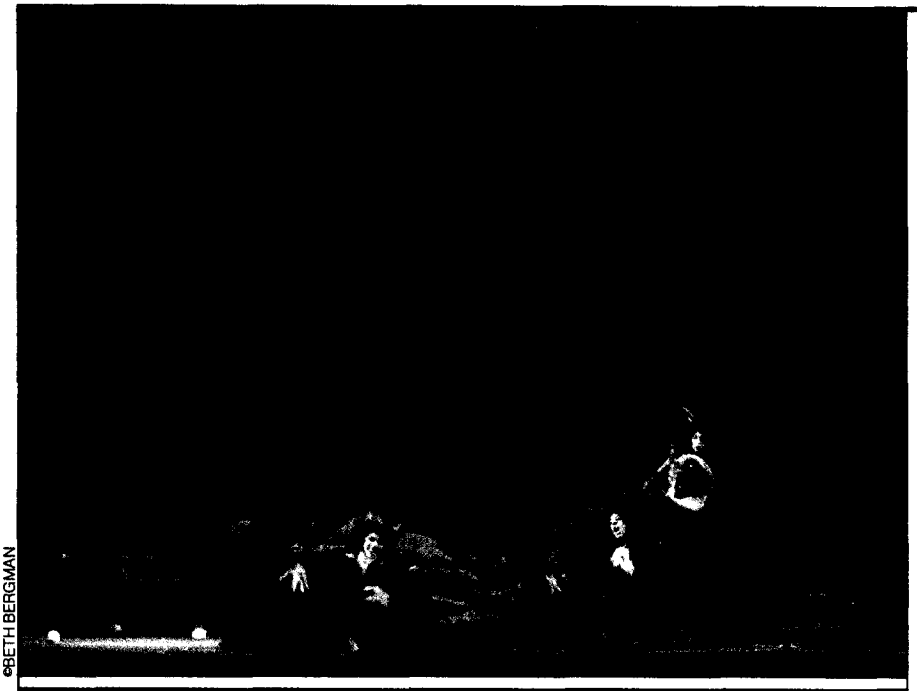

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MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Top: Atlantic Richfield helped pay for the New York City Opera's production of Leoš Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen.* Bottom: Romare Bearden's collage, "Patchwork Quilt," from a touring retrospective sponsored in part by Philip Morris.

'Help me because my salary got cut in half.' That shows a misunderstanding of how corporations work. Companies don't put factories in areas of high unemployment except for economic reasons, and they don't usually say 'Let's give to this fine philharmonic orchestra because it's in trouble.'

"But they are generally eager to respond if they can be shown that there's something in it for them. Museums and dance companies should present business proposals—say to corporations, here's what you would spend, here's what you might get in return. Usually it's only publicity and good will, but that's important to companies. Arts people should think of underwriting and contributions as marketing tools, rather than saying to corporations, 'Give us money because we need it.'"

Corporations that are still wondering about the payoff from investing in the arts might consider the experience of United Technologies, headquartered in Hartford, Connecticut. "When I was offered my job three years ago I had never heard of United Technologies, and we're the 10th largest manufacturing company in America," says Gordon Bowman, director of corporate creative programs. "I had only heard of Sikorsky, Pratt & Whitney, and Otis Elevator, which are all part of United Technologies. So our goal was to make ourselves more visible but in the right way."

The corporation selected the arts, in large part because of the interest of Harry J. Gray, company chairman. It began by contributing to the Hartford opera, theater company, museum, ballet, and symphony, then it turned to underwriting important national exhibitions of paintings and photographs.

"Corporations tend to do what they want to do," says Mr. Bowman. "Some underwrite tennis matches, others sponsor outboard-motor races, we do art. What are you to think when you see the sponsor's name on the back wall of a tennis court? We hope when you see our name as underwriter of an exhibition of photos of Eisenstadt you'll say that's a smart thing to do.

"We want people to think of us as smart and creative, because creativity is our business. There are things we could probably support more cheaply and even more visibly, but they wouldn't make the same impression or be anywhere near as interesting."

Nathan Johnson writes regularly about the arts and business.

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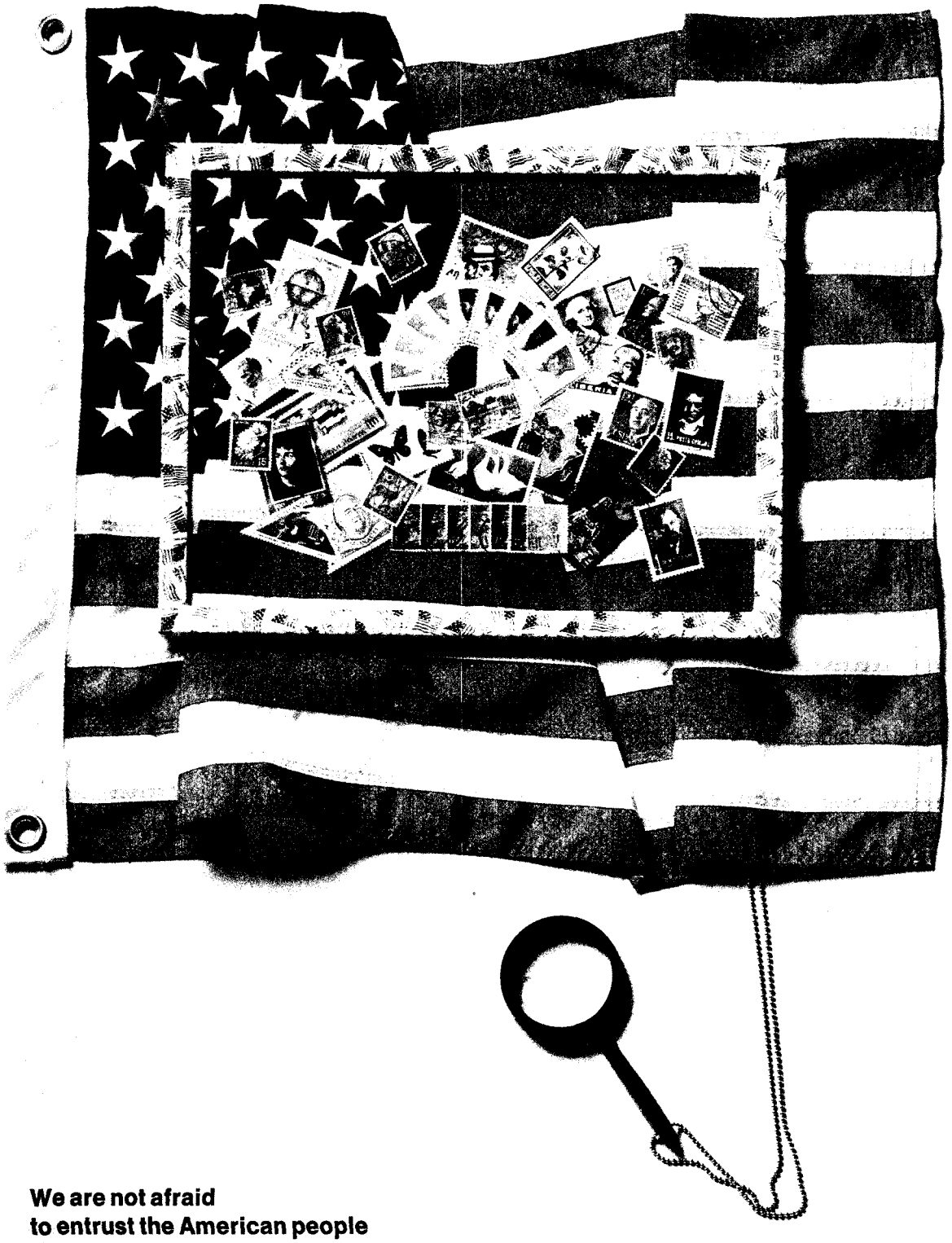

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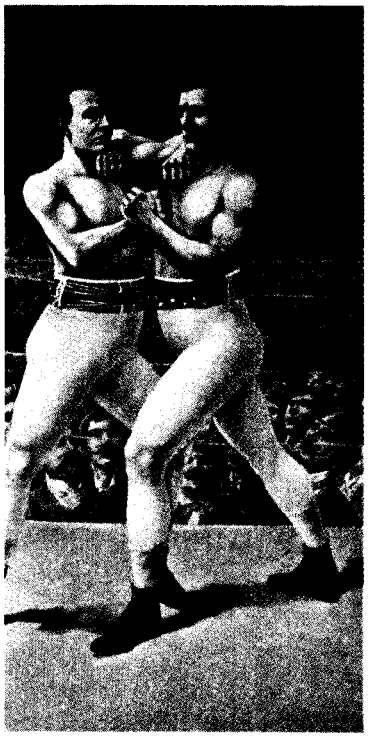

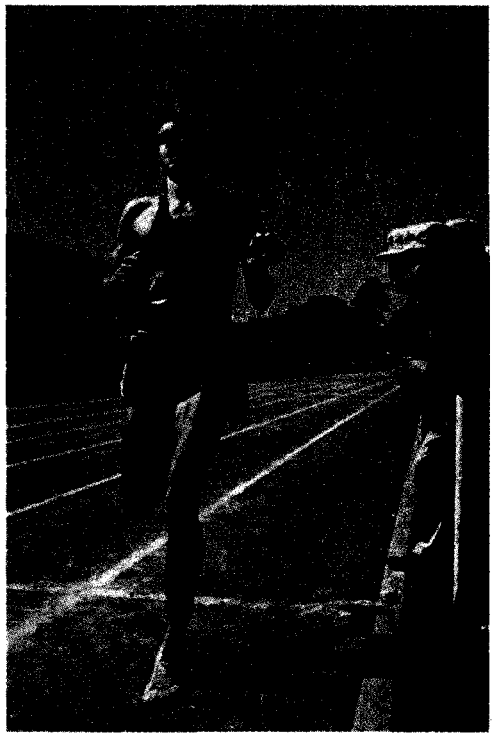

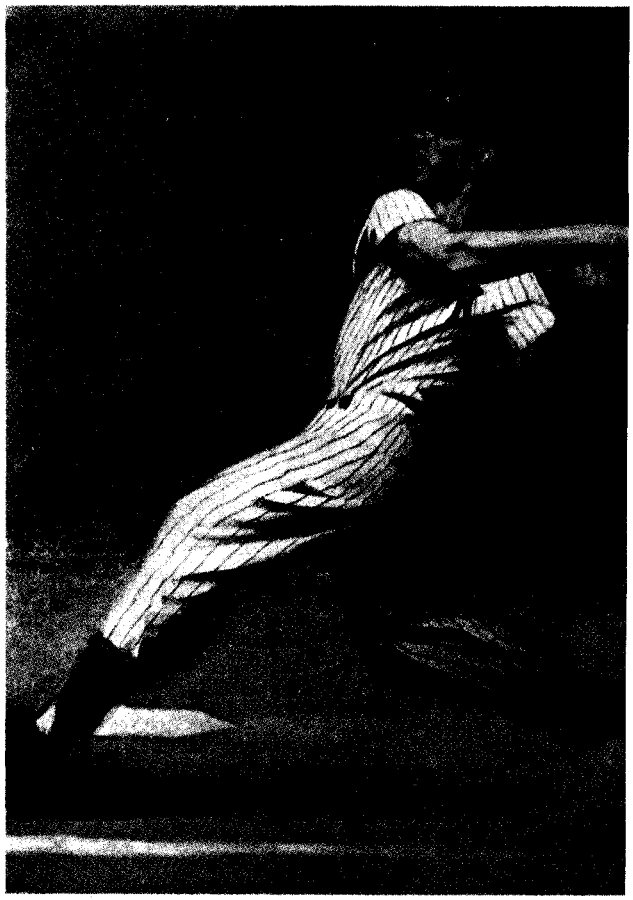

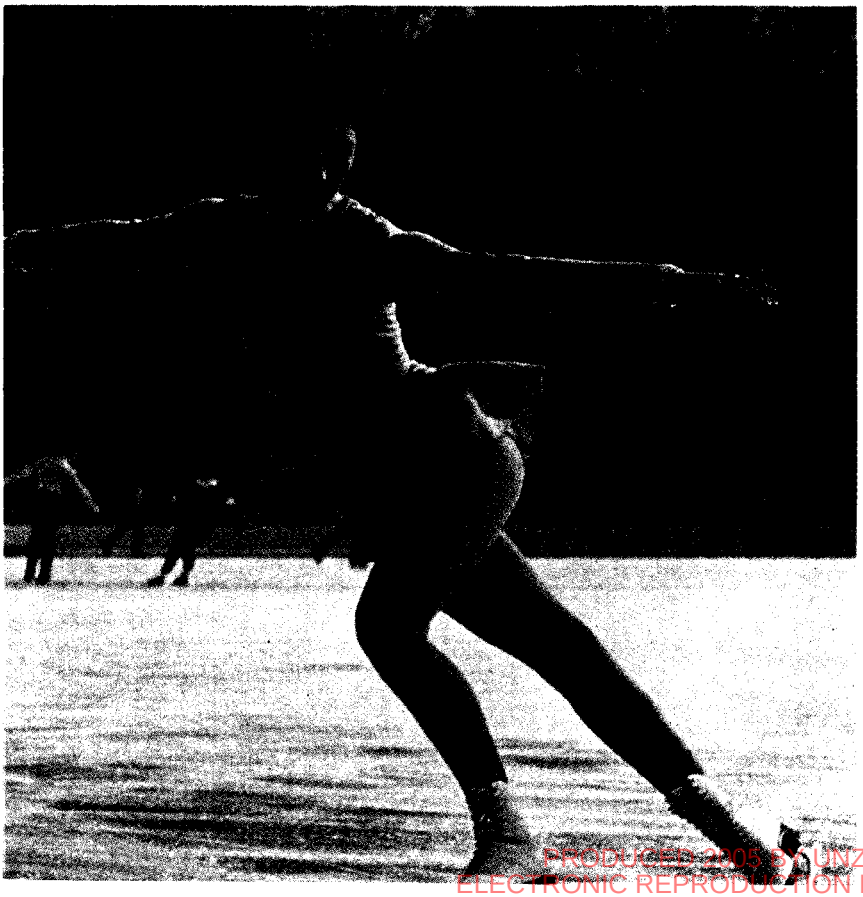

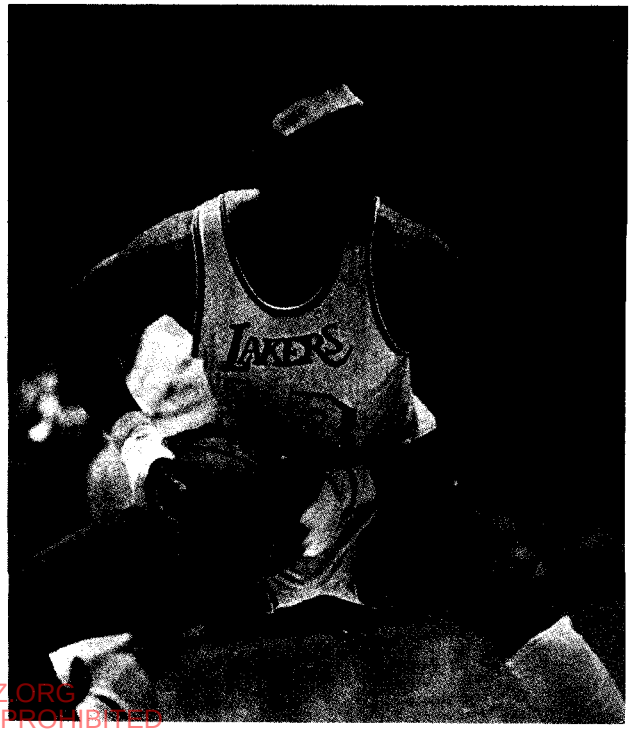

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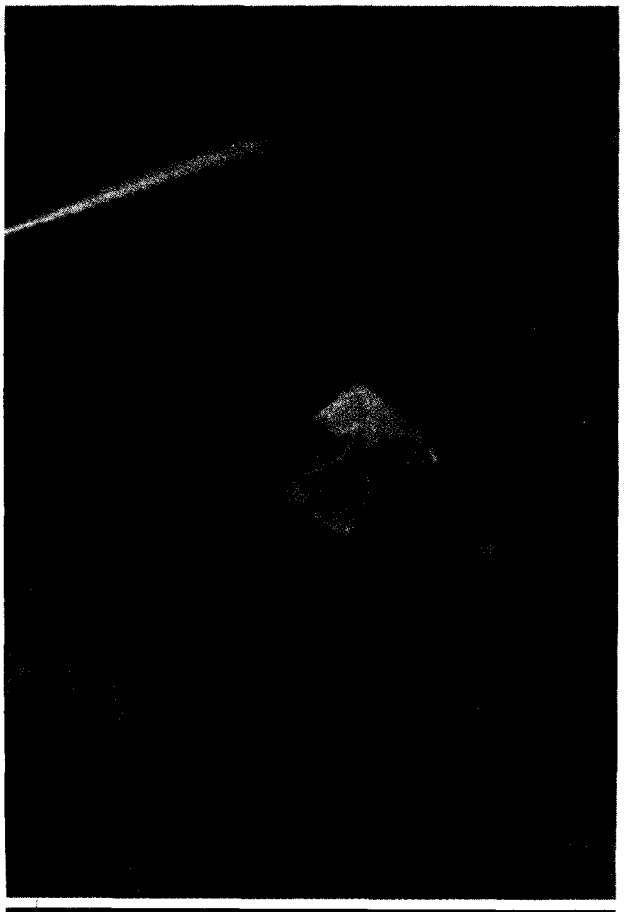

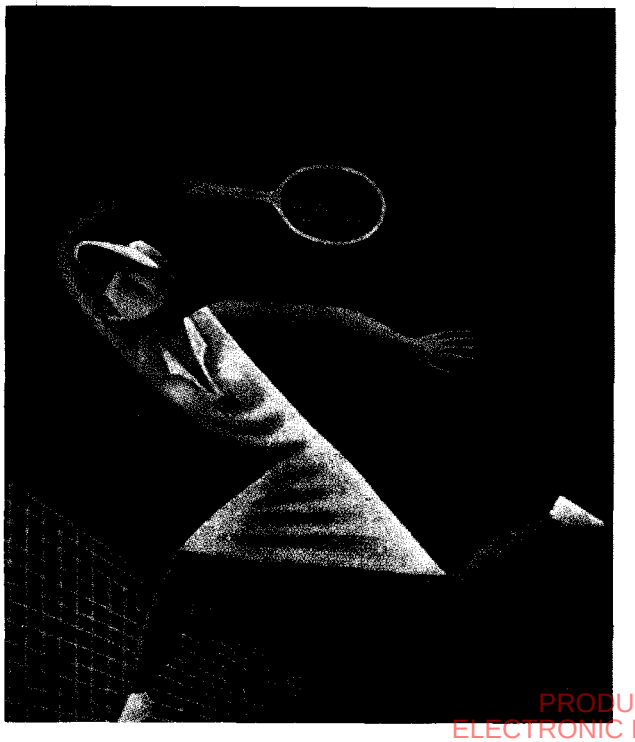

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"Champions of American Sport" organized by The National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. It will appear there June 23 to September 7, 1981 and subsequently travel to Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, IL, October 15 to November 29, 1981; California Museum of Science & Industry, Los Angeles, CA, January 15 to February 28, 1982; and American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY, April 2 to June 27, 1982. The exhibition is sponsored by Philip Morris Incorporated and Miller Brewing Company.

(top left) Giles Litho Company, JAMES J. CORBETT DEFENDING HIS TITLE AGAINST CHARLIE MITCHELL, 1893, Chicago Historical Society. (top center) Photograph of JIM RYUN by RICH CLARKSON, 1966. (top right) Harvey Dinnerstein, THE WIDE SWING, 1975, Capricorn Galleries, Bethesda, Maryland. (bottom left) Photograph of PEGGY FLEMING by John G. Zimmerman, 1968. (bottom center) Photograph of WILT CHAMBERLAIN by WALTER IOOSS, JR., 1972. (bottom right) Miguel Covarrubias, HELEN WILLS, c. 1927, Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin. *© Philip Morris Inc. 1981*

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The Magic of Yo-Yo Ma

by Richard Thorne

He gave his first public recital at the age of six. By the time he was 19, critics were comparing the young cellist to Russian-émigré master Mstislav Rostropovich and invoking the memory of Casals. With no dissenting voices and a remarkable lack of critical equivocation, Yo-Yo Ma was hailed not only for his technical brilliance, but for his precociously developed powers of interpretation. What so impressed the musical community was the mind behind the music, the palpable intelligence that suffused his playing.

Then, too, Ma as a performer has a special quality, what *New York Times* critic Harold C. Schonberg calls "factor X"—a charismatic personality and the ability to project it while playing, which separate an artist from the pack. Ma, says Schonberg, "comes right out over the footlights and hits you square in the face." When Ma was 22, the *New York Times* was saying that any speculation about his talents maturing or ripening with age "would be entirely presumptuous."

Isaac Stern champions Ma (now at the ripe age of 25) as "one of the prime talents of our time." Lorin Maazel of the Cleveland Orchestra, himself a string-playing prodigy, recognizes in Ma a true colleague. He conducted Ma in a recent recording of Lalo and Saint-Saëns concertos and says, "Ma is a cracker-jack instrumentalist. As a conductor one never has to worry: His thorough competence carries him through every imaginable pitfall. And he's a sensitive musician. He knits himself into the fabric of the music, he becomes a part of it. He plays with great panache."

Saturday Review's music critic Irving Kolodin points out that there is often a narrow distinction between an outstanding musician and a very good one; what separates them is not so much technique as personality. In this connection, Harold Schonberg tells of once asking Artur Rubinstein to name the best young pianists. Rubinstein replied, "They all play better than I do. They have better memories, techniques you wouldn't believe. But I'll tell you one thing, when they come out on stage they might as well be soda jerks." Ma, says Schonberg, "is no soda jerk."

A growing number of musical professionals have begun touting Ma as the world's greatest living cellist, and a recent survey of record producers and musicians' agents pegged him as the leading candidate among all younger soloists (whatever their instrument) for future superstardom. Who is this young colossus and what makes him so special?

He was born in Paris, October 7, 1955. His father, music teacher, violinist, and composer Hiao-Tsiun Ma had left China to settle in Paris during the Thirties, preferring the musical climate of Europe. He started Yo-Yo's older sister playing the violin when she was two and a half, and he began teaching Yo-Yo the cello (using a child-sized instrument) when the boy was four.

"My father has always been interested in education," Yo-Yo Ma remembers. "My sister was his first guinea pig. He taught us everything from the beginning: theory, ear training. He would poke a note on the piano and say, 'What's this? Is it an A? That's right, it *is* an A.'"

Yo-Yo jokingly refers to his father's educational discipline as "the whips and chains." But he also remembers, "I would learn only two measures a day, which is no strain at all. And obviously, if the next two measures are the same, you're in luck." After a year of study, Yo-Yo had learned, two-by-two, all the measures of three Bach cello suites. "Everyone would say to my father, 'Ma, you're driving your kids crazy!' But it wasn't hard work. My father didn't believe in long hours of practicing; he really believed in very concentrated work. It *was* mentally hard work. I used to practice only five to 10 minutes a day, but whatever I did had to be done with tremendous concentration. And you know, I *hated* those 10 minutes. But then I had the advantage of living with those Bach suites for...just think: I've been playing them for 20 years now!"

The elder Ma successfully taught his son the excitement of musical challenges. If a phrase didn't work the first time they would play musical games, trying to figure out different ways of solving the problem. "I wasn't just learning the physical parts of the instrument, but really thinking: If this doesn't work, how am I going to get around it?" Ma feels that the problem-solving process he learned then frees him now from having to spend long hours practicing, a chore he has always, until recently, disliked. "And learning the way I did, stringing the last two measures onto the next one and on and on—one sees how one pattern overlaps another, how the music expands and contracts."

Ma gave his first recital at the University of Paris when he was six. The next year, his father moved the family to New York in order to take a posi-

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WASHINGTON POST

At 7, Ma performed in "An American Pageant of the Arts," in Washington, D.C. (with sister Yeou-Cheng, 11—now a pediatrician).

tion teaching at a school attended by Isaac Stern's children. Through this connection, Stern heard Yo-Yo play. Impressed, he recommended Ma to his frequent chamber music partner, cellist Leonard Rose at Juilliard. "At first," says Ma, "I think Rose wondered, what do I do with a kid? He ended up teaching a lot by demonstration, which seemed to work; not so much by analyzing, but mainly through sort of feeling the instrument, being at one with it."

Ma studied with Rose from the age of nine until he was 16. "By the time Yo-Yo was 11 or 12," recalls Rose, "I had already taken him through all the most difficult études. He may have one of the greatest techniques of all time. I'm always floored by it."

When Ma was 16, Rose suggested he spend the summer at Meadowmount, a music camp run by the late Ivan Galamian, whose students included Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, and Jaime Laredo. "I think Rose wanted Galamian to teach me the bow arm," says Ma. But he learned little that summer. Released for the first time from his disciplined home environment, Ma recalls, "I just went wild: Never showed up at rehearsals, left my cello out in the rain, beer bottles all over the room, midnight escapades to go swimming, and just about everything."

On the advice of Stern, among others, Ma enrolled at Harvard, and that seems to have restored a certain balance to his life. "It made me less neurotic," he says, "by seeing all the possibilities in life." He took courses he'd always wanted to take—German, sociology—and met people in other fields, expanding his perspective beyond the somewhat insular world of music. It allowed him, he feels, to make a more open-eyed commitment to music. "After I graduated I could tell myself: I have a BA, I can do other things if I want to. It's not that I'm stuck playing the cello because it's the only thing I can do."

Since graduating, Ma has begun pursuing a soloist's career in earnest. He makes his home in Cambridge with his wife, Jill, who teaches German at Harvard (where Ma is artist-in-residence). But often he is traveling to perform all over the world, giving recitals (frequently with pianist Patricia Zander) and concerts under such conductors as

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von Karajan, Previn, Mehta, and Ozawa. During the past season he formed an occasional trio with pianist Emanuel Ax and violinist Young-Uck Kim.

Ma's position as rising young superstar is unusual, given his instrument. Through the 19th century, most cello soloists were appreciated for their virtuosity, but few were credited with musical depth. Most composers felt uncomfortable writing for the cello (Dvŏrak and Saint-Saëns, for instance, wrote first-class concertos for the instrument, but each also complained of its musical intractability). As a result, the solo repertoire is limited, and to choose the cello is to perform pretty much the same compositions everyone else plays.

Pablo Casals (1876-1973) finally convinced the world that the cello could match the violin as a solo instrument, that virtuosity on the cello could be wedded to musical intelligence. And the 20th century has responded. Many modern composers have written for the instrument, including Reger, Kodály, Hindemith, Britten, Carter, Crumb, and Penderecki. And in Casals's wake has come a procession of first-rate virtuosos: Gregor Piatigorsky, Pierre Fournier, Janos Starker, Jacqueline du Pré, Mstislav Rostropovich, Leonard Rose—and now Yo-Yo Ma.

It is tempting to account for Ma's success by citing the unusual cultural mix in his background, the kind that often produces a wide-ranging empathy blended with a cautious detachment. Ma, who grew up speaking French, Chinese, and English, feels that he has absorbed the common humanity that runs through Chinese, French, and American traditions. "If you are exposed to different cultures," he says, "I think there's a tremendous amount of cross-fertilization that goes on which, to me, only enriches the individual." Ma thinks of himself, he explains, as completely American, "but my family's more like a stereotypical Jewish family than anything else. My mother: Eat, eat, *ess, mein Kind*—except she'd say it with a Chinese accent."

But clearly, Ma's artistry can't be explained so simply. On top of his cross-cultural perspective, one must add the close, measure-by-measure analytical training he received from his father, and his acceptance into the highest international music circles before he was in his teens (even if, at first, only as a pupil). In addition, Ma explains, he strives to understand verbally most of the music he plays, a goal few other musicians pursue. In rehearsal, he will often discuss the score just like a method actor dissecting a new script. "It makes me more precise," he says. "Rather than making sweeping statements, I have to support my argument. We do, though, sometimes get carried away. You can get so conscious of finding the right word that you spend two hours without playing."

To pianist Emanuel Ax it is Ma's intelligence, coupled with his natural flair for performing, that makes him "one of the greatest string talents I've encountered. Yo-Yo always likes to have good, solid, intellectual reasons for why we play things a certain way. He's developed his brain, he's a thinking person. And one doesn't have to bow to technical considerations when playing with Yo-Yo. I can ask him to do anything, to play a note or a phrase on a certain string, try for a certain color—I probably annoy him with my suggestions sometimes. I'm a frustrated string player."

(continued)

Young-Uck Kim (left) and Yo-Yo Ma at Vermont's Marlboro Music Festival in 1976.

WOODROW LEUNG

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Observed in rehearsal with the Harvard Bach Society Orchestra, Ma slips as easily in and out of the music as he might slip into French during a bilingual conversation—but it is a conversation that always demands 100 percent of his attention, with which he is thoroughly involved. Playing along with the orchestral parts, he engages the musicians around him as if he were playing chamber music, gesturing with his bow arm to the cellist across the podium, looking back at the violinists, exaggerating the attacks, trying to pump up the rhythmic vitality of the piece. During slack moments he jokes with the students (though fully professional, there still exists in the boyish Ma something of the college cut-up). But on stage or off, it is simply in Ma's personality to be completely *there*, no matter what he is doing. And when he's playing, as Young-Uck Kim says of him, he never simply performs, he's always totally inspired. The solo lines ring out with a special intensity.

The sound Ma draws from his cello (made in 1722 by Matteo Goffriller in Venice and previously owned by Pierre Fournier) is as pure as any other prominent cellist's—except Rostropovich's, whose deep cashmere opulence is in a class by itself. Moreover, Ma's feeling for and his ability to communicate the Romantic repertoire is on a par with—but not better than—Rose's or Piatigorsky's. The talents that carry Ma to the head of the pack are his electrifying virtuosity and the breadth of his musical sympathies. When Rostropovich rips into a bravura display, for instance, listeners gasp and think, "It's astonishing what he can do with a cello!" But when Ma's fingers dance through a similar passage, listeners think, "That can't be a cello. It sounds as if he's playing an oversized violin!"

On records, it is easy to trace Rostropovich's virile, Byronic attack through most of the cello repertoire. Similarly du Pré's interpretations nearly always sound ethereal, lost in wonder at the music's beauty. Ma's interpretations, on the other hand, always downplay his own personality in favor of the composer's. He can be alternately dashing and melting as the Lalo or Saint-Saëns concertos demand—but he can just as easily become airy and frolicsome when he turns to Haydn in a way that Romantic specialists can't. His recording of the two extant Haydn concertos (CBS Masterworks M-36674) offers more delight in the composer's cheerful good humor than any other interpretation on record. Ma's cello seems to burst periodically into chuckles. No other cellist is so perceptively at home with the music of Haydn *and* Lalo *and* George Crumb.

When the late Pablo Casals was at his best—like Toscanini, like Heifitz at their best—his interpretations could persuade an audience that no second interpretation was possible: This was the way the music *had* to sound. Ma has not yet accumulated a legacy of such ultimately persuasive performances—but at the age of 25, Casals hadn't either.

What Ma has proven once and for all is that his virtuosity is unique and fearless. Recently he even began performing his own transcriptions of Paganini's satanically difficult caprices for the violin. "I made myself do them for some perverse reason," Ma says. "A week before I was to play them in concert for the first time, I panicked. Why had I ever decided to do this? I started practicing four hours a day and developed a new muscle on my hand." He flexes his hand and a lump appears where one wouldn't expect it. "When I got to the concert I almost had to be pushed out on stage. But I did it—for which I'm now grateful. Everything else is easy compared to that. It's given me a new freedom playing; I can experiment more on the musical values and not have to worry so much about technical things."

Ma overcame another hurdle when he underwent a successful operation for curvature of the spine last summer, and it seems to have assured a rich future for himself and for music-lovers alike. "I used to think that life ended with that operation," Ma says. "I didn't dare plan ahead. I was prepared to do something else afterwards, there was always this one percent chance something might go wrong. But now, suddenly, I feel that the rest of my life is ahead of me, which is a luxury I never had before. It makes me very, very happy." ■

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Last March, Ma performed on public television on "Gala of Stars," playing a Mendelssohn trio with James Levine at the piano and Itzhak Perlman on the violin.

Richard Thorne writes about cultural issues for national publications.

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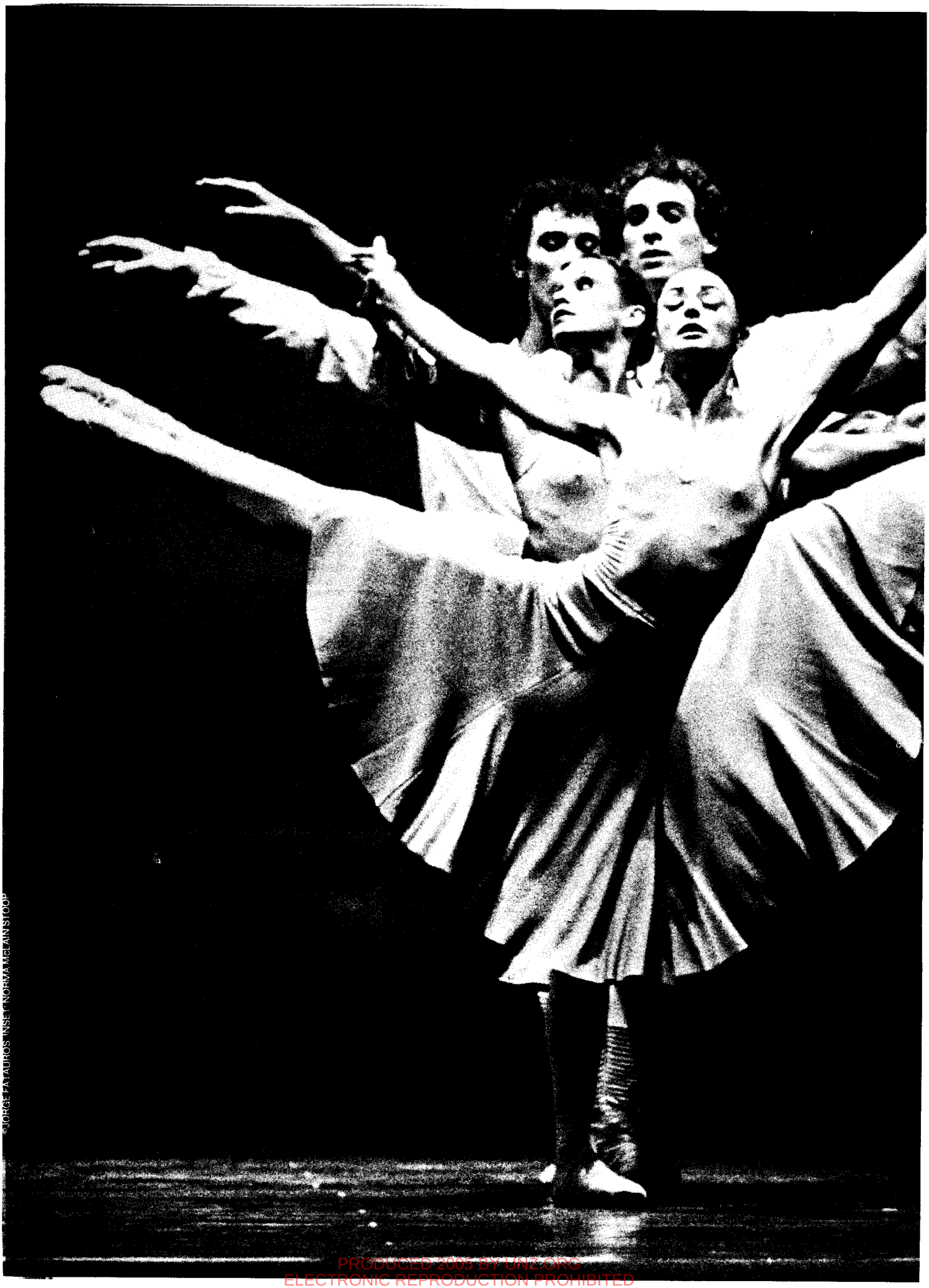

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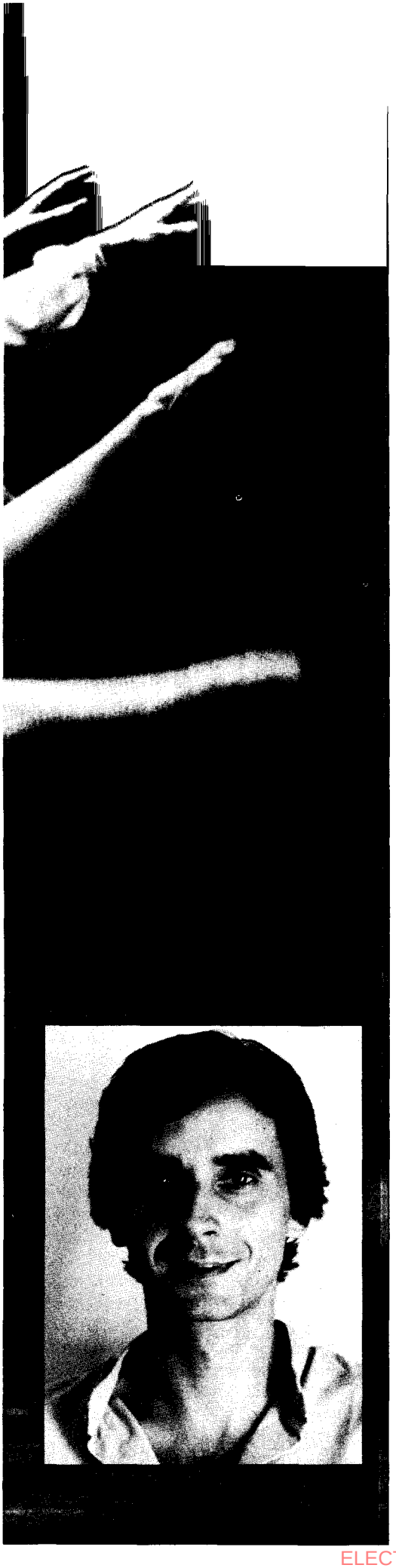
Ballet's Brightest Hope

by Walter Terry



The comparatively small Netherlands Dance Theater would not be performing in New York's vast Metropolitan Opera House this month if it were not for the gigantic talent of its artistic director and chief choreographer, Jiři Kylián. At the moment, Kylián (rhymes with "vermillion") is the most promising ballet choreographer of his generation (he was born March 21, 1947, in Prague, Czechoslovakia), and his talent is all the more rare since he works in the field of ballet, not modern dance. The training of almost every modern dancer includes elements of choreography; in ballet, with few exceptions, the dancer is taught only to perform, not to create. Thus ballet's great choreographers are born of an inner compulsion, an urgency, a necessity to speak through movement.

The magnitude of Kylián's talent first exploded on the American scene when the Netherlands Dance Theater performed his ballets at the 1978 Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, South Carolina. The NDT, founded by the American ballet master Ben Harkavy at The Hague in 1959, had been well received in earlier U.S. appearances under other artistic directors and with different choreographers. But nothing in the past equaled the shouting, roaring, and standing ovations that greeted all performances in Charleston. Kylián himself, who had assumed the artistic directorship of the company less than two years before, was overwhelmed by the response. At that time, he said, "I screamed 'Bravo!' at my own matinee. It was the first time in my life I was so excited I cheered my own dancers." His ballet, *Sinfonietta*, set to the music of the Czech composer Leoš Janáček, was created especially for Spoleto. It was the hit of the festival and has remained an NDT favorite wherever performed around the world.

The instant success of *Sinfonietta* had directors of American ballet troupes besieging Kylián for requests, "Do a ballet for us" or "Let us have something you have already choreographed." Almost overnight, Jiři Kylián had become the hottest choreographic commodity in the dance world. To requests for his ballets, he said no. To requests for his company, he and his associates said yes. In 1979, the Netherlands Dance Theater returned to New York, but for the first time under Kylián's direction, and appeared in an enormously successful two-week engagement at the old City Center. The music, however, was on tape. For the upcoming Met season and subsequent appearances at the Wolf Trap Festival near Washington, D.C. (July 15 through 18) and at the Metropolitan Center in Boston (July 21 through 26), there will be a full orchestra, live, to support an all-Kylián repertory of seven ballets, three of them new to American audiences. Two productions, *Symphony of Psalms* (set to Stravinsky) and *Soldiers Mass* (set to Bohuslav Martinů's "Field Mass"), will utilize a chorus as well as an orchestra.

The nervous, almost desperate, eagerness with which Kylián is courted by directors of ballet companies, producers, and theater managers on a worldwide level testifies to a crying need the ballet profession is experiencing with respect to choreography. Oh yes, there

The Netherlands Dance Theater performing *Sinfonietta*, choreographed by Jiři Kylián (inset), his U.S. debut ballet.

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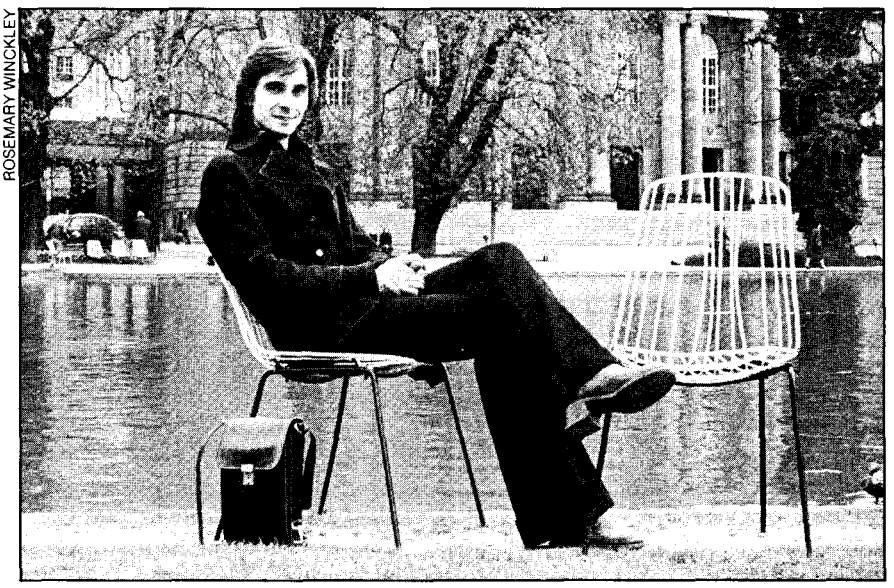
are competent choreographers, a few really good choreographers, but where is the *great* choreographer? Does he exist?

Of course, there are choreographic geniuses at work. There are America's Russian-born George Balanchine, guiding genius of the New York City Ballet, and England's Sir Frederick Ashton whose choreography has accounted for the eminence of the Royal Ballet. Balanchine and Sir Frederick, though remarkably active, are each approaching the age of 80. America's Agnes de Mille is in her seventies and Jerome Robbins in his sixties. There are no other choreographers for ballet in the same class with this mighty, innovative, influential quartet except ...maybe Kylián. If Kylián is not yet there, he is, at the present, closer to Olympian levels of choreographic accomplishments than anyone else among makers of ballets.



ROSEMARY WINCKLEY

Kylián insists, "Watching the work of other choreographers has not affected me."

Where are ballet's choreographers? Where are the equivalents of modern dance's continuing output of dance makers (although "prime" choreographers are in scarce supply there also)? When Eliot Feld burst upon the ballet scene as a choreographer with his *Harbinger* for the American Ballet Theatre in 1967, the very title of his ballet suggested that a thrilling new talent was only just beginning to reveal itself. A few subsequent ballets appeared to confirm that promise, and soon afterward Feld was funded sufficiently to form his own company. Perhaps the pressures of running his own enterprise diluted his choreographic energies. Or perhaps some combination of over-confidence, isolation from potential colleagues, and other factors militated against his efforts. But Feld has not become the second Robbins (with whom he had been compared)—or even a first Feld.

In the mid-Sixties, there were many who believed that Gerald Arpino, principal choreographer for the Joffrey Ballet, was destined to become *the* choreographer of the era. He turned out some highly effective ballets, and still does, and he is skillful in infusing sports or rock or sexual explorations into ballet. But glibness, a sense of superficiality, and more than passing brushes of tastelessness replaced the rather touching innocence and genuine imaginativeness of his very early ballets.

The San Francisco Ballet's Michael Smuin (in his forties) and the Cleveland Ballet's Dennis Nahat (in his mid-thirties), both made their first solid impacts as choreographers in their days with the American Ballet Theatre. But neither has yet projected that elusive quality of incandescence that seems to radiate from almost every movement, phrase, passage, scene, or complete ballet that Jiří Kylián touches. Mikhail Baryshnikov, when he first assumed the directorship of the American Ballet Theatre a year ago, said, unhesitatingly, "Kylián? If we could get him, I'd *give* him our ballet theater!"

The choreographic paramountcy of Kylián might suggest that there are no other ballet-makers on the horizon. There are. Some may make it: Danish-born Peter Martins of the New York City Ballet; the Dayton Ballet's Stuart Sebastian; the Boston Ballet's Bruce Wells; Singapore-born Choo San Goh; and the American John Neumeier, director of the Hamburg Opera Ballet. But for the present, Jiři Kylian is clearly the anointed one among the world's young choreographers.

Though Kylián's international recognition has arrived only recently, his urge to be a choreographer dates from when he was nine years old. "I'd come home from school," he says, "put on some music and dance to it. I was far less interested in becoming a professional dancer than most dance students. Way back then I started being excited about other people making interpretations of my thoughts and my ideas."

At 15, Kylián entered the Prague Conservatory where he had his first training in the arts. Subsequently, he continued his studies at the Royal Ballet School in London (1967), and in 1968 he joined the Stuttgart Ballet as a dancer. In Stuttgart, he was fortunate in having the guidance of the late John Cranko (1927-1973), who as a director had not only built the Stuttgart Ballet into one of the world's great troupes but who was viewed as one of the major young choreographers of our era. Kylián, without in any way being imitative of Cranko, seems to be filling the choreographic void left by Cranko's untimely death at 45.

Cranko's encouragement was important to Kylián, for he asked the young dancer to choreograph a ballet for the Stuttgart, but his influence was minimal. As a child, Kylián's first impulse to choreograph came not from seeing dances but from the arts of painting, sculpture, drama, and, of course, music. Today, he says, "My original inspiration for choreography came from a combination of these arts, so when I left Czechoslovakia I was confronted, for the first time, with ballets by such leading choreographers as Cranko, Jerome Robbins, Kenneth MacMillan, Glen Tetley, and Hans van Manen. I found this inspiring but it did not change my basic inspiration. Watching the dance works of other choreographers has not affected me."

Elements of the musical, the pictorial, the dramatic, united in an incandescent physicality, are what startle, capture, and finally enthrall the viewer at a first exposure to Kylián choreography. The first time the curtain rose on *Sinfonietta*, I was lifted by the sight of a company of dancers exploring space in great unison leaps. Here was a

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ballet that opened with a climax but it never occurred to any of us to question whether this young, new choreographer could keep up the pace. With irresistible kinetic logic, the unison leaps metamorphosed into patterns of successive vaultings as if one were seeing, somehow, the continuing beat of the heart. A gentler, more contemplative section followed, and here were Kylian's images and figurations making statements of pictorial beauty. And, yes, he did top his opening climactic sections with a superclimax in which spatial pathways were traveled not only with the great leaps that had introduced the ballet but with racing, soaring lifts as the men thrust the women onto a plane of action that no human could attain unsupported. And then a resolution into a simple walk of hope for tomorrow.

In his intensely dramatic *Ariadne*, the women, in long skirts, move to vocal music. Their actions are a seamless integrating of classical ballet steps and modern-dance movements. All too often, with some other choreographers, we see a tormented coupling of two techniques and styles with modern-dance movements balanced precariously on ballet *pointe*, or we see modern-dance patterns divested of earthiness by the introduction of balletic lightness. Not so with Kylian.

In fact, in his comic *Symphony in D* (to music of Haydn), Kylian uses the *pointe* work of the female dancer as "a setup" for his mockery of ballet's most idiotic moments. For other creations, he says, "I use the *pointe* only when it is needed. I'm really very old-fashioned in the sense that I believe in expressive dance and if there is a reason, a motivation to use *pointe*, I use it not for technical display but for its expressive values.

"There are ballet dancers who reproach me because I don't use the *pointe* in all my ballets, but lately I've developed a style—I hate to use that word—that is *unthinkable* to do on toe. The dancer can move very fast when in place with the toe shoe, but with the speed I need to cover ground, they could never do it on *pointe*. They'd be in real trouble."

Does this mean that there is a recognizable look to Kylián choreography, a trademark? "I'd prefer to think I *didn't* have a style," he says. "I like to change my ways from ballet to ballet. But of course you cannot avoid your own handwriting. *Symphony in D* and *Ariadne* are as different from each other as ballets could possibly be, yet they are both babies of mine. I suppose there are some points at which they meet. And, yes, I'm aware that there can be 'Kyliánisms' in my choreography. But it is difficult to avoid. For example, I love to make duets; and I have a hard time making myself do solos or pas de trois or something other than pas de deux, but it happens because I'm drawn to the relationship of two people.

"I also like to use dancers with their backs to the audience—*Sinfonietta* ends that way—but I fight to avoid copying myself. It's bad enough to be guilty of imitating oneself but it is even worse when I see others copying me. It doesn't make me angry if I observe another choreographer taking my steps, but it disturbs me to see my movements turned into clichés."

Kylián insists, moreover, that his choreography depends heavily on the performers themselves. "The dancers who do my dances," he says, "are *not* 'second casts' of myself. I create *for* them and they interpret my dances in their own ways. You know, the bodies of different dancers inspire different qualities of movement. With the same ideas and the same music and with two different interpreters, two different performances result. I like this because each dancer places a different aura around my dances, touches them with a different magnetism."

> ***"I'd prefer not to have a style—but you can't avoid your handwriting."***

The core of Kylián's choreographic inspiration may well be found in nature itself. "It's man as part of nature—or not a part of it—that concerns me. What our world is doing today is getting further and further away from nature. It is wrong! I still believe that people have feelings and emotions that are tied to nature, dependent on nature; and these are the points that interest me and that I am trying to explore."

When I first met Kylián three years ago, he was intensely concerned with doing a ballet about the aborigines of Australia, who are among the closest to nature of the world's remaining primitive peoples. The project occurred to him almost eight years ago, and it cannot be realized until a commissioned score is completed a year from now. But the remoteness of an aboriginal culture in Australia and a Czech-born Dutch choreographer is erased by the concept of man and nature. "They are," says Kylián of the aborigines, "the closest to the soil, to the earth of all peoples. And this is because they are not interested in 'development.' They don't want to develop. They want to *stay*, and that is the extraordinary strength that radiates from them when you meet them."

His ballet about the aborigines will not be ethnic dance in any way. "Strangely enough, it will have little to do with the formal culture of the aborigines themselves. What my ballet is about is what happened to me when I was with them. Seeing the aborigines, talking to them, and just being there recalled so many of my childhood feelings, the almost puristic feelings one has at the time of puberty. It was a return to naiveté in the best sense of that word."

Kylián is by no means unaware of his swift rise to international recognition as the most exciting choreographer to emerge on the world stage in a long, long time. This soft-spoken, intense, and vital young man with a keen sense of humor, attempts to explain, without arrogance, the reasons for his success: "I think it's a combination of many factors but I believe the most important thing is that I try to portray the normal side of people. No, not 'normal,' that word has such bad connotations—so let us say 'average.' What I try to do is provide portrayals of the ordinary person, his basic needs, his emotions, his relationships. The second important aspect of my work is that I want to see people in their closeness to nature. Thirdly, I think my choice of music contributes to the success of my ballets. I rarely use ballet music; I take concert pieces for my dances and I try to penetrate the composer's own world and see if I can find how *he* would have danced to his own music if he had been so inclined.

"Lastly, I think what is important to my ballets is a 'down-to-earthness' from which the spiritual emerges, as if from the soil itself. It is like a plant, a flower. The roots are solidly embedded in the ground, they are covered with dirt, but the flower that comes from it is beautiful and spiritual and sweet-smelling and quite wonderful. But you must never forget its base." ■

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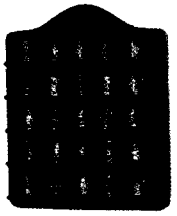

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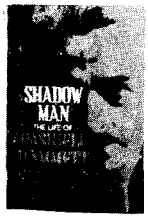
Sleuthing Hammett

by Anthony Burgess



Shadow Man: The Life of Dashiell Hammett
by Richard Layman
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/Bruccoli Clark 267 pp., $14.95

Since Dashiell Hammett's death just 20 years ago a nonreading generation has grown up that prizes *The Maltese Falcon* as a great old movie (the definitive version with Bogart, not the earlier essays) and has seen the saturnine author himself, enacted by Jason Robards, in the film *Julia*. The books themselves are in print and are paying off the debts with which Hammett died burdened, along with a pulmonary cancer, emphysema, pneumonia, and diseases of the heart, liver, kidneys, spleen, and prostate gland. Posthumously he has become a glamorous literary figure.

In life he tried to fulfill, without pretensions and with a certain scorn of the adulation of men like André Gide ("I wish that fag would take me out of his mouth," he said to Malraux), an aim that Raymond Chandler strove for with equal success, though he had Hammett's example to emulate—the conversion of a popular genre into genuine art. *Red Harvest*, *The Dain Curse*, *The Glass Key*, and *The Thin Man*, as well as *The Maltese Falcon*, are admirably shapely pieces of writing, with dialogue a little truer than life, an implied ethic that places greed and violence against a backcloth of quixotic decency, and rounded characterization in the tradition of serious fiction. Like Chandler, Hammett reached art the hard way—through a long apprenticeship to lowly craft. He was a pulp man first—*The Black Mask*, *True Detective Stories*, *Mystery League Magazine*—and before that he was a Pinkerton operative.

Sam Spade may have been an extravagant invention, but he never does anything that a real-life op would reject as implausible. Hammett once went to the trouble of listing, in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, technical errors that made a good deal of pulp crime unacceptable. Thus: "The automatic pistol ... is not a revolver. A pistol, to be a revolver, must have something on it that revolves." Again: "Federal prisoners in Washington D.C. are usually sent to the Atlanta prison and not to Leavenworth." Again: "The California State prison at San Quentin is used for convicts serving first terms. Two-time losers are usually sent to Folsom." Again (here was the sharp ear matching the eye): "Even detectives who drop their final g's should not be made to say 'anythin'—an oddity that calls for vocal acrobatics" and "'Youse' is the plural of 'you.'" Literary seriousness begins with a concern for accuracy.

Hammett began to get his critical rewards with Dorothy Parker's rave in the *New Yorker*: "It seems to me that there is entirely too little screaming about the work of Dashiell Hammett. My own shrill yaps have been ascending ever since I first found *Red Harvest*, and from that day the man has been, God help him, my hero...." How badly the Parker prose-style wears; how well the Hammett:

> At one time or another I've had to tell everybody from the Supreme Court down to go to hell, and I've got away with it. I got away with it because I never let myself forget that a day of reckoning was coming. I never forget that when the day of reckoning comes I want to be all set to march into headquarters pushing a victim in front of me, saying: "Here, you chumps, is your criminal." As long as I can do that I can put my thumb to my nose and wriggle my fingers at all the laws in the book.... This is my city and my game. I could manage to land on my feet—sure—this time, but the next time I tried to put over a fast one they'd stop me so fast I'd swallow my teeth. Hell with that. You birds'll be in New York or Constantinople or some place else. I'm in business here.

Hellman and Hammett at "21" in 1945. Layma

That is Sam Spade talking. Spade

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would not have been greatly affected by the news that Parker went "mooning about in a daze of love" for him. His creator always distrusted the showy and excessive. He had too hard a life to learn enthusiasm easily. When he became an enthusiastic liberal, even a Marxist, he learned that even in the field of high ideals enthusiasm did not pay. Standing on the Fifth Amendment during the bad witch-hunting time of the Fifties, he spent six months in jail for contempt, and his health, never good, broke for the last time.

No writer who achieves even a moderate success in his lifetime and an unshakable status after it can easily be pitied. We've been inoculated against overmuch compassion by the example of Dr. Johnson's great life of Richard Savage. Hammett begins his adult life with tuberculosis and poverty; at the summit of success he falls for the Hollywood fleshpots, drinks too much, fails on his deadlines, saves nothing, sneaks out of the royal suite of the Beverly Wilshire with a huge bill unpaid. He invents Nick and Nora Charles (eternized by William Powell and Myrna Loy) and sustains a *Thin Man* series in growing cynicism. ("Maybe there are better writers in the world but nobody ever invented a more insufferably smug pair of characters.")

Hammett was always quick to detect smugness. He wasn't impressed by Hemingway's muscle, which the great man used in lieu of ratiocination. When World War II came he enlisted, though well over age, as a buck private and froze in the Aleutians, while old Hem insisted on running a private army and liberating Paris single-handed. He learned a sympathy for the downtrodden, which he was too honest to wish to exploit in books. While Hemingway moaned, Hammett worked for a cause. America let him down but he merely went into uncomplaining retreat, dying like a lion. He stopped writing when, by all actuarial standards, he had his best writing years in front of him. But he didn't like repeating himself. When he had nothing further to say he shut up. He recognized that when people could talk of the "Dashiell Hammett style" that style was already useless to him.

LIFE PICTURE SERVICE

w biography of Hammett offers few details of their relationship.

There will be votaries of Lillian Hellman ready to read Richard Layman's brief biography only to find out how Dash got on with her. We learn little enough. Hammett helped her with her dramaturgy and even did a fine cinematic adaptation of *The Watch on the Rhine*, but we do not know what they talked about, let alone did, when boozing or in bed together. Hellman, behaving like a literary widow, has laid proprietary claims to the biographizing of poor Hammett, though she has not yet produced a biography. This bitch-in-the-mangerish attitude has deterred at least three potential life-writers, but Layman has gone ahead fearlessly and produced what can never be definitive but is certainly a beginning. It's a pity that his courage is not matched by his ability. A biography should be a work of literature; this book is not well written, though it is loaded with materials that cry out for the careful, witty, and elegant assembly of a portrait. It is a token work, a foot in the door, and will be of immense use to the first man or woman prepared to bring grace and charm to the massive work of presenting not merely a life but a time.

S.J. Perelman, in his posthumous book, has, for instance, fired our desire to know more about the Manhattan hotel that the author of *The Day of the Locust* ran for a space and which is a mere wraith in Layman's account of Hammett's intermittent New York days. And there is the matter of Hammett's weird first name. "Annie Hammett, who held herself superior to her in-laws in all things, told stories of the bravery the French De Chiells showed in battle, and in honor of her ancestors' dignity—which she found so lacking in the Hammetts—she called her son Dashiell." We want to know more about these De Chiells. We want to know more about a lot of things. A literary biographer has a literary duty—which is not fulfilled by giving us outlines of plots. Of the nature of Hammett's talent we are given no true summation: The gushes of Dorothy Parker *et al.* are eructations of satisfaction, but we would like to know why people thought Hammett's confections were good. There is a great deal still to be said about that perilous frontier where the stuff of trash mysteriously turns into the material of art. ■

Anthony Burgess is the author, most recently, of *Earthly Powers*.

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Inimitable Perelman

by Marshall Brickman

The Last Laugh
by S.J. Perelman
Simon & Schuster
160 pp., $11.95

The first time I met S.J. Perelman, the conversation turned to contemporary written humor, which he observed was a craft as obsolete and thankless as the manufacture of whalebone corset-stays. The name of a writer came up, a woman who had gleaned brilliant notices for a collection of rather ordinary pieces. I was searching for the precise phrase to characterize what I felt was the pallid quality of the lady's prose when Perelman leaned over and whispered, "*milchedig*." I felt at that moment a rush previously experienced only while watching Jerry West sink one from the outside, an elation, a momentary identification with—and admiration for—risk, accuracy, and grace.

The lady's style was, inarguably, *dairy*: light, bland, reminiscent of a cottage cheese *blintz*; it lacked the *fleischig* or meaty weightiness that sticks to the rib being tickled. Furthermore, the woman herself was in fact pasty, pie-faced, unsanguine. But Perelman said it all in one word, a critique both sympathetic and devastating. Sympathetic because I felt no real malice from him; the Yiddishism conveyed an impersonal, benign evaluation, and the effect was as though he had beaned her gently with a matzo ball. Devastating because it was deadly accurate. There at work behind the soft brown eyes behind the gold-rimmed spectacles was the legendary, laser intellect that could encourage you to keep up the good work or carve you up with the surgical detachment of the *novy* counterman at Zabar's.

Eighteen years before, as a freshman at the University of Wisconsin I was introduced to sex, the music of Bach, and the writings of Perelman, all within the same week; and to this day I count Bach and Perelman among the best of these pleasures that may be experienced alone and without guilt.

Like the great polyphonist from Leipzig, Perelman created his unmistakable and amazing style out of innumerable eclectic sources, fashioning from the world's literature and the din of contemporary voices and attitudes the gaffs with which to skewer an entire civilization. No one but Perelman could combine classical cadences, gothic pulp, Yiddish, advertising hype, detective fiction, foreignisms, stylistic allusions, and show-biz jargon with the kind of exhilarating result that may be found, to take a practically random example, in a little gem entitled "Zwei Herzen in die Drygoods Schlock," from his latest and last collection, *The Last Laugh*. The piece, in the form of one of Perelman's demented playlets, occurs entirely in a closet in Los Angeles. Charisma von Ausgespielt, a character based on Diane von Furstenburg in a way that makes libel lawyers rub their hands together expectantly, has just been surprised by an unidentified man emerging from the closet. After a brief, snippy encounter, he exits, leaving her to contemplate her dowdy wardrobe:

> CHARISMA: My goodness, what a pepper pot. You can't hardly rummage through your own shmottas nowadays without some ignatz snaps your head off. (*She enters closet and begins sorting dresses, disillusion writ large on her countenance.*) Ugh, to think I ever wore such anachronistic frocks—I must have seemed a frump indeed in these habiliments. However, thanks to a clever needle and the shrewd midwifery of *Women's Wear Daily*, *Burke's Peerage*, and the *Almanach de Gotha*, I am now on easy street, a biggie in the garment center, and almost finished scrivening my forthcoming smash autobio, *She Spins to Conquer.*

Of course, any Perelman taken out of context does an injustice to the material—the full resonance of the references, the word play, the clichés used not to obfuscate but to illuminate—much of this is lost; what remains is the impeccable rhythm and the outer hilarity. Like the music of Bach, the stuff always *sounds* great, but becomes truly spectacular once you become aware of the inner voices.

Part One of *The Last Laugh* consists of 17 pieces (mostly reprinted from *The New Yorker*—where, miraculously he published for 49 years). They cover such diverse subjects as publishing (something that seemed to concern him increasingly toward the end of his life—three out of the 17 pieces deal with it: "The Joy of Mooching," "Under the Shrinking Royalty the Village Smithy Stands," and "Is There a Writer in the House?"), gurus, the fashion industry, writing for the screen, and afternoon soaps. In "The Frost Is on the Noggin," he combines a Dashiell Hammett anecdote with the premise that Abe Lincoln is alive and living in New York City, subsisting by shoplifting frozen butterball turkeys in his stovepipe hat—surely the oddest conceit I have ever encountered in years of juggling odd conceits. Even Perelman has to puff slightly to make that one play, but his skill is so great that even if the initial subject seems a tad unwieldy, like Frederick the Great's for Johann Sebastian, it's still a pleasure to be present at its working out.

The second part of the book, "The

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Hindsight Saga" (why isn't *this* the title of the book?), consists of "Fragments of an Autobiography": personal reminiscences of the Marx Brothers, Dorothy Parker, and Nathanael West (whose sister Perelman married); plus three loosely bound anecdotes about Perelman's stint in Hollywood as a screenwriter. Perhaps the Hollywood material has special resonance for one who has experienced firsthand the ambivalence inspired by that odd desert in the midst of an oasis; but for me, the description (in "Three Little Screenplays and How They Grew") of Perelman and his wife, two pathetically displaced easterners, trying to make a go of it socially and culturally in the Hollywood of the Thirties, is especially wonderful: The section in which Hunt Stromberg, a producer, tries, while the Perelmans look on dumbstruck, to fashion a vehicle for William Powell and Luise Rainer by combining Shaw's *Arms and the Man* with Oscar Straus's *The Chocolate Soldier* is all you ever really need to know about Hollywood, and is alone worth the price of admission.

The reader of any Perelman collection will discover his own favorites. Mine, in addition to "Zwei Herzen" and the autobiographical material mentioned above, are "Methinks the Lady Doth Propel too Much," about an encounter on Martha's Vineyard with a mermaid; "To Yearn Is Subhuman, to Forestall Divine," because it contains a Raskolnikov-like young film genius named Strobe Fischbyne; and "Is There a Writer in the House?," because it begins with the following sentence:

> Some years ago, I began harboring a suspicion that the individual writer as such was obsolescent and would soon become as extinct as Battenberg insertions, Pluto Water, and Ayvad's Water Wings.

I'm not exactly sure what it is about that sort of thing that makes me feel that everything is going to be all right after all; perhaps it's the comforting image it conjures up of Perelman, impeccably dressed in a pongee suit and a lawn tie, browsing through a catalogue of Victoriana, while the world around him, as a mutual friend once put it, rockets into the toilet.

The last time I saw Perelman, he had just returned from the Southwest, bearing, like an ornithologist some rare desert bird, the word "totaled." He had overheard the neologism used by a garage mechanic near Amarillo, or wherever it was, to describe what had happened to a '51 Chevy that encountered a milk truck at 60 miles an hour head-on. "The car," he repeated gleefully, "was totaled." He treasured the word and the concept, and one could sense it being deposited in the General Fund, to be retrieved instantly at the moment of quintessential utility.

I have heard that there are those who find Perelman rough going. The prose, they say, is too dense; the spirit too evaluating; the references too arcane. There is nothing I can do for these unfortunates except to remand them to eternity with a copy of *The Joey Adams Jokebook*, a fate they richly deserve. At the other extreme are the frantic devouts who would pull his stuff apart to see what makes it tick—like Chaplin with the clock in *The Pawn Shop*, with about the same result. I belong to a third group, which stands at some remove, agape at his accomplishments. I don't know how he got his effects, really; I guess either you're Perelman and you get them or you're not and there's nothing for it. Despite his generous acknowledgments to Ade, Leacock, Sullivan, and others, he cut a path that was unique, original, and inevitably a trap to those who admire his work enough to try and emulate or analyze it. His genius defies criticism. He was the maestro, nonpareil, incomparable, beyond interpretation. As he himself once said, before they made Perelman, they broke the mold. ■

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The late S.J. Perelman's essays were unique, original, and a trap to emulators.

Marshall Brickman, co-author with Woody Allen of *Sleeper* and *Annie Hall*, wrote and directed the movie *Simon*.

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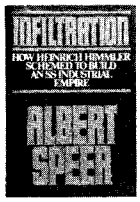
"If It Weren't for Himmler..."

by Telford Taylor



Infiltration
by Albert Speer
translated by Joachim Neugroschel
Macmillan
368 pp., $15

No student of the Third Reich or World War II should fail to read this third and latest book by Albert Speer (Hitler's personal architect and, after 1942, his Minister for Armament and Munitions), for it offers a wealth of detail and insights that augment understanding of decision-making in the Third Reich. But the general reader will find it hard going. In large part this is Herr Speer's fault, but neither the translation nor the editing has made the author's work any easier to digest.

As published in Germany, the book is entitled *Der Sklaven Staat* ("The Slave State"), and subtitled "My Conflicts With the SS." According to the publisher, Speer himself suggested the title *Infiltration* for the American edition. "It was well known that one or more of Himmler's confidential agents occupied important posts in every ministry," Speer tells us, and much of the book concerns the activities of these "agents" in keeping Himmler informed and in promoting Himmler's aims within the government branches to which they were ostensibly responsible. In a foreword, Speer explains that:

> My original plan was to write a book about German armaments in the Second World War. I thought it best to begin with the most difficult chapter, that of the role of the SS in the armaments industry and in the war economy. While preparing this chapter, I stumbled upon the writings of the SS Reichsführer [Himmler] in the Federal Archives at Koblenz....The material was so rich that it soon exceeded the scope of a chapter; hence I resolved to devote my book to the failure of SS industrial efforts.

And that is what he did, dividing his book in four parts. The first deals with the conflict between Himmler's ambition to create an SS industrial empire with a significant share in war production, and Speer's decision, as Minister for Armament and Munitions, to rely primarily on private management—the policy of "industrial self-responsibility." The second and third parts recount Himmler's machinations, deceits, threats, and other nefarious tactics in furtherance of his ambitions, together with his fantasies and failures. These included support of preposterous projects such as using fir tree roots for oil and dandelion roots for rubber, and his mishandling of the long-range rocket program.

The fourth, and much the most interesting part, concerns the conflict between those who, like Speer, wished to use the Jews as a source of skilled labor, and the hard-line exterminators, among whom Speer numbers Hitler himself but, surprisingly, not Himmler:

> The dichotomy in this man, who was in charge of total mass murder and yet who constantly went against extermination policies, leads me to suspect that he was not the driving force in the murder of the Jews. I would point instead to Hitler, Joseph Goebbels, and that hate-filled mover [*Motor*, in the German] Martin Bormann.

The translator's use of the bland, unidiomatic "mover," rather than "engine" or (figuratively) "dynamo," is an example of one of his failings. His English is dull and often confusing. Thus an SS officer is described as "disillusioning" instead of "disillusioned"; a chapter is opaquely entitled "The Disorderly Concern," although the German *Konzern* denotes what we would call a corporate combine or conglomerate; an explanatory footnote tells the reader that "The Armaments Inspection, under General Waeger, summed up and evaluated the work of the Armaments Inspections," whereas an accurate translation is: "In the Armaments Department, under General Waeger, the work of the Armaments Inspectorates was surveyed and evaluated."

The translator is also hopelessly inconsistent and inaccurate in his rendering of German ranks and titles. Army and SS ranks are sometimes given in German, e.g., *Obergruppenführer,* and sometimes in English, usually inaccurately. Thus "Squad Commander" is the rendering of *Gruppenführer*, although a "squad" is a small unit usually commanded by a noncommissioned officer, while a *Gruppenführer* was the SS equivalent of a major general.

As for the substance of the book, it seems to me unfortunate that the author did not carry out his original intention to deal with the German war economy and armament generally. Relying on private business management as he did, Speer must have observed much of the behavior and attitudes of German civilian leaders confronted with the opportunities, responsibilities, hazards, and tensions of those times. But except for an occasional reference—such as to the efforts of Hermann Bücher of the General Electric Company to protect his Jewish employees—there is nothing. The detail of Speer's many difficulties with Himmler and his minions, now nearly 40 years in the past, is oppressive, and at times gives the impression that Speer, like some German generals, is telling us

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that, but for the interference of Hitler, Himmler, and their ilk, Germany could have won the war.

Probably this was not intended, for there is no lack of *mea culpa* in these pages. "Even now at seventy-five, decades after the events, I am still haunted by the thought that I could have made decisions in a minute that would have improved the situation of the unfortunate inmates" [of labor camps]. Speer discusses perceptively the atrophy of moral sensitivity among the Nazi administrators, and their use of wartime necessities as a device to block awareness of the meaning of their acts and decisions:

> Until the fall of 1944 I was one of those who put all qualms aside when the needs of war demanded it. Also, I was so deeply in Hitler's thrall that I would have suppressed any comments merely because of a look of disapproval on his face. Yet how often Hitler had threatened the Jews with annihilation. For me, the tens of thousands who disappeared into the ghettos were lost to the labor process ....Today, forty years later, it is incomprehensible to me that I thought the number of tanks produced more important than the vanished victims of racism.

Not quite all of the intended victims vanished. As Germany's military situation deteriorated, the demands for workers grew ever louder, and there was open resistance in the army supply agencies to the deportation to extermination camps of Jews whose industrial skills were contributing substantially to the output of munitions and other war material. General von Gienanth, the Military Commander in occupied Poland, was too outspoken and lost his job. By 1944 some Jews were being brought back from Auschwitz to factories where the labor needs were especially urgent.

Furthermore, administration of the "final solution," like that of other SS programs, was far from uniformly efficient. For example, in the portions of Poland annexed to the Reich (the Warthegau and Upper Silesia), Jews continued to be employed until the approach of the Soviet armies in the fall of 1944. Aware of current "literature" denouncing the Holocaust as a hoax, Speer warns that these departures from the extermination policy lend no support to the arguments of "right-wing extremists," and endorses Raoul Hilberg's conclusion that three million Polish Jews were murdered.

THE GRANGER COLLECTION. INSET: LIFE PICTURE SERVICE

Albert Speer in 1970—and in 1934, going over architectural plans with Hitler.

Infiltration is indeed a mine of information and insight. Unfortunately, it reads like a spontaneous monologue spoken to a former colleague. Names of persons well known to top officials of the Third Reich, but meaningful today only to students of those times, are used throughout with little by way of identification or reminder. If ever a book cried out for glossaries of names, ranks, and offices it is this one, but the editors have given no help.

The book rambles on in a manner wholly uncongenial to the nature of the subject. Once again blaming Himmler, Speer explains:

> The disorderliness of Himmler's empire and the unsystematic nature of the material reflect the character of the events and not an inability on my part to put things in order. In short, the seeming disarray of the material in this book arises from the disorder inherent in that empire.

Like shortcomings of this review may similarly be attributed to the "disarray" (*Unordnung*) of Herr Speer's book. ■

Telford Taylor is Kaiser Professor of Constitutional Law at the Benjamin Cardozo Law School, former chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes trials, and author of *Munich, the Price of Peace*.

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The Best Books for Summer Reading

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Summer is our favorite season for reading. As the onslaught of new titles subsides, the pile of books beside the bedstead at long last begins to shrink. Like a sudden cool breeze or an ice-cold drink, a good read is welcome relief this time of year. Not that the well-crafted, well-told tale isn't a pleasure in any season, but we remember fondly one particular long hot August that was made tolerable only by the adventures of Augie March, Don Corleone, and the population of Yoknapatawpha County.

Warm weather brings out idiosyncratic reading habits. One acquaintance of ours returns to *Pride and Prejudice* each summer the way some people return to a lake cottage: It's an annual event eagerly anticipated all winter. Another bibliophile, intensely discriminating the rest of the year, reads whatever crosses his path come summer, whether Dickens or *Doonesbury*. And we have one friend who will accommodate just one book during the course of the summer—but that novel must consist of no less than 1,000 pages; what she wants is a dependable relationship that will last until the fall.

Whether you are poolside, beach-bound, hiding from the sun, or venturing no further than the back stoop this summer, a plethora of worthy titles awaits you. Our list of the best books for summer reading tries to suggest appropriate titles for all sorts of tastes. The armchair/beachchair excursions we've liked best will transport you from a white hotel to a men's club, from a cell in Argentina to a park in Moscow. Here are our recommendations.

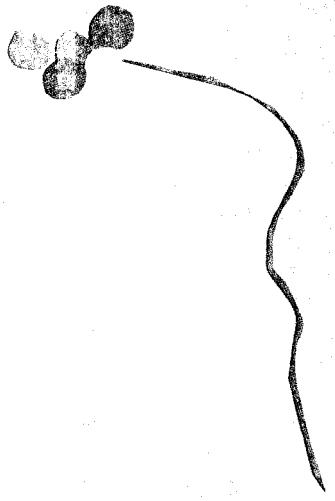
Fiction

Surely the sleeper novel of the season is D.M. Thomas's **The White Hotel** (The Viking Press, 288 pp., $12.95). Thomas, an English poet, has created a marvelous heroine, Lisa Erdman, a factitious patient of Sigmund Freud. In this frank, extraordinarily rich description of power and passion, Erdman fantasizes a white hotel where she has an affair with Freud's son while meteor showers decimate the clientele. Employing poetry, letters, journals, even an analysis written by Freud himself, Thomas has written a dazzling exploration of the attractions between two opposites: the death wish and the pleasure principle. Here is that rare novel that deserves the critical acclaim accorded it.

Summer plays a crucial role in Robb Forman Drew's first novel, **Dale Loves Sophie to Death** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 217 pp., $11.95). In what has become a disconcerting annual ritual, Dinah Howe leaves her husband at home in the Berkshires, takes the three children, and wends her way back to her Ohio hometown. This is an exquisite, meandering drama about Dinah's need to resolve her past before she can proceed with the present. The perceptions are so acute, the sentences so well-shaped that Drew transforms the seemingly mundane into understated, but stunning revelations. We think it's a must for the season.

There's also a controversial first novel by Leonard Michaels, the author of two prize-winning short-story collections. In **The Men's Club** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 181 pp., $10.95), a group of men gathers in a Berkeley living room to talk over their past lives and loves. Despite what some reviews have suggested, this novel is not merely a response to feminist literature. There are no wounded tirades here, no noxious releases of pent-up resentments. Instead, Michaels has fashioned a compassionate and intelligent novel about man's need for woman, not man's dismissal of her. One might say that *The Men's Club* is about love, but that word doesn't seem strong enough. A more primitive connotation is required. If one ignores the debate surrounding the book, Michaels is a pleasure to read simply for his skill as a stylist. Not a word falls between the cracks in this masterful novel.

Relationships between men are the concern of **Dad** (Alfred A. Knopf, 449 pp., $12.95), the second novel by Wil-



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liam Wharton, who received smashing notices for *Birdy*. Here, the subject is the battle and burdens between a middle-aged son and his increasingly senile father. *Dad* is less eccentric and arty than *Birdy*, but the simplicity makes the book all the more powerful. In Wharton's telling, experience—lunch, baseball, television—accumulates as naturally and surely as aging itself.

Memoirs of an Anti-Semite (The Viking Press, 288 pp., $13.95) is an equally uncompromising piece of fiction. Rumanian author Gregor von Rezzori has painted an unforgiving, unforgettable portrait of a bigoted young man in five semi-autobiographical stories. The rebellious son of aristocratic, anti-Semitic parents recounts his reluctant, repeated encounters with Jews between the world wars. In one story, trying to escape his fate, he marries a German Jew, with tragic results. For all his bigotry, this hero is a remarkably appealing character, always the first to expose his values and subject them to merciless, scalding irony.

The Chaneysville Incident (Harper & Row, 432 pp., $12.95) concerns racism on home ground. David Bradley's novel follows a black professor of history who travels to rural Pennsylvania and the death bed of his one-time mentor—an unseemly, unsightly old man with the obligatory cabin in the woods. Before the mentor dies, he tells stories that send the hero reeling into his past. Bradley's subjects are slave-trading, story-telling, and lost horizons. His novel about the eradication of memory is itself most memorable.

Two short, funny novels—one by a newcomer, one by an established pro—round out our fiction choices. **Fat Woman** (Alfred A. Knopf, 179 pp., $9.95), a first novel by Leon Rooke, describes the bittersweet fate of Ella Mae Hopkins, a wife who wears a kitchen mitt to hide her bulging fingers. Ella Mae consumes guilt as easily as she does sweets, and Rooke renders her plight with good humor and great empathy. **Zuckerman Unbound** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 225 pp., $10.95) constitutes Philip Roth's sequel to his much-admired 1979 novel, *The Ghost Writer*. In this episode, Nathan Zuckerman has written a hit novel, *Carnovsky* (closely resembling *Portnoy's Complaint*), and its success leads to a series of misadventures. This is a portrait of the Serious Artist as Paranoid Celebrity. Unfortunately, Roth skirts the serious issues involved here: the consequences of art, the creation of a celebrity-crazed society, the sources of creativity. But often comical, occasionally touching, *Zuckerman Unbound* is pleasant, if minor Roth.

"Can I have your assurance that none of you guys is George Plimpton?"

All Summer Long

For those readers who fancy lengthy historical novels, there are three epics worth picking up at the moment—though picking up these extravaganzas can be dangerous business: One friend swears she sprained something lifting James Clavell's **Noble House**, a four-pound novel of Japan (Delacorte, 1,200 pp., $19.95). Instead of the ancient history of *Shogun*, this time Clavell focuses on modern events, specifically, one week in Hong Kong during 1963. In *Noble House*, East meets West once again: The head of Hong Kong's oldest trading house duels with a wealthy American who wants to add Noble House to his holdings. According to our calculations, one day lasts an average of 177 pages in this novel.

M.M. Kaye, the British author of *The Far Pavilions*, takes her readers to another exotic locale in **Trade Wind** (St. Martin's Press, 553 pp., $15). A

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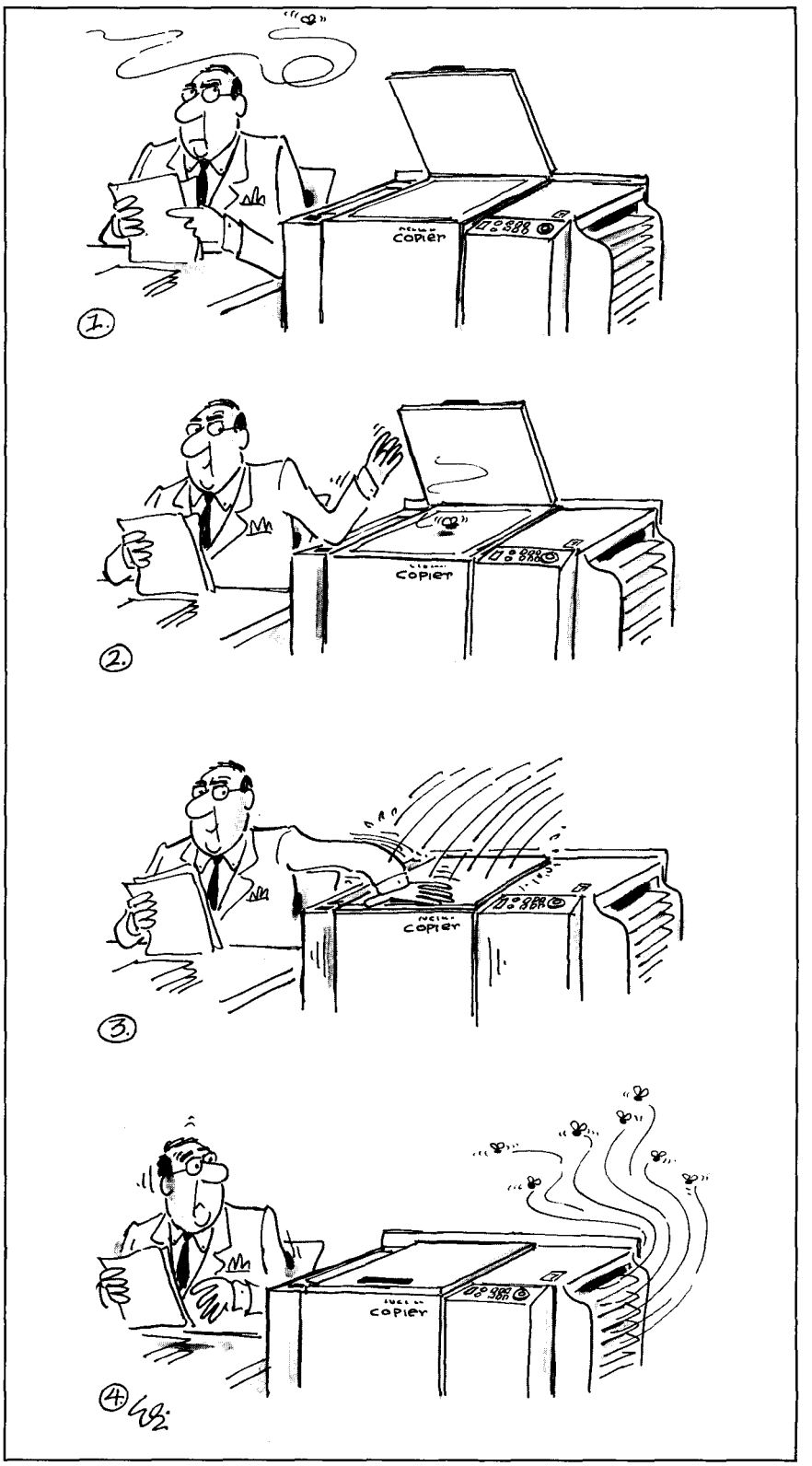
proper Bostonian lady arrives in Zanzibar just prior to the American Civil War. In the course of one year—and 40 chapters—she will become quite less proper and a good deal more knowledgeable on the subject of Zanzibar. For those readers who like to glide along on historical details, *Trade Wind* delivers the requisite details.

Another entertaining expatriate presides over **Mr. American** (Simon & Schuster, 448 pp., $14.95). Conceived by George MacDonald Fraser, best known for his "Flashman" adventure series, Mr. American is a delightfully mysterious chap who arrives in England circa 1910 and immediately ingratiates himself with a high society that is bewildered and fascinated by him. As extra added attractions, a smattering of historical personae, including the King himself, saunter through this crafty romp. Like Clavell and Kaye, Fraser is no master of the fresh phrase or subtle irony. But he is an expert puppeteer of history and plot.

Mysteries

It's been a good year for mysteries: There are new titles from old friends Joseph Wambaugh, Dorothy Uhnak (*The Investigation*), John D. MacDonald, and one blockbuster from a writer who, until recently, hadn't hit the nerve of success. We suggest you begin with the season's smash hit, Martin Cruz Smith's **Gorky Park** (Random House, 384 pp., $13.95). Smith has written a grade-A thriller (inscrutable prosecutor, two-timed detective, suntanned and duplicitous protagonist), which he sets against the unfamiliar background of life in the USSR. Smith sweeps us into the tumult of this story, but his sympathetic imagination is as crucial here as the clever plot.

If you prefer the citified run-around of New York, try Dorothy Uhnak's **False Witness** (Simon & Schuster, 384 pp., $13.95). A beautiful female television star is savagely beaten in her own apartment. Then the ambitious female



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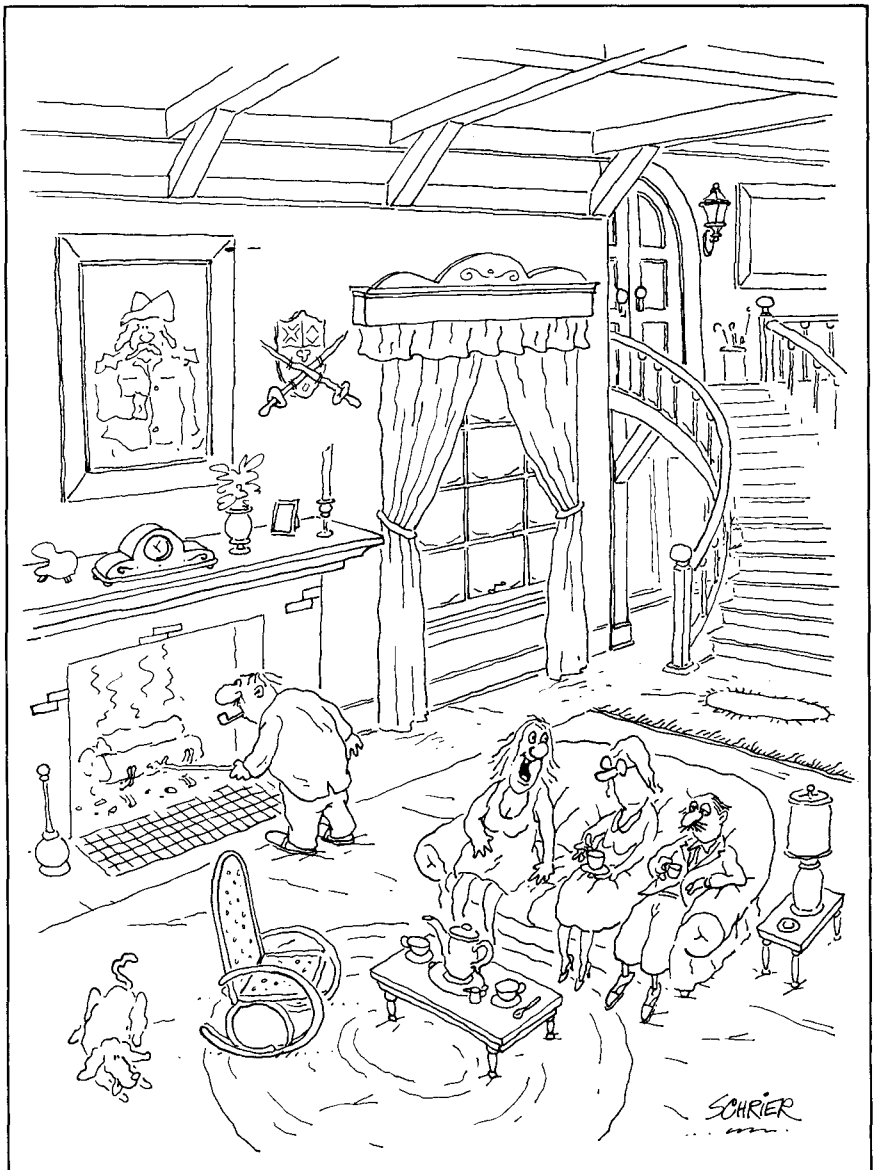
bureau chief, in her driving determination to become district attorney, loses both her man and the case. *False Witness* is gritty, but gripping.

If you liked *The Choirboys*, you'll probably enjoy Joseph Wambaugh's new thriller, **The Glitter Dome** (William Morrow, 299 pp., $12.95), and its display of citified raunch, LA-style. Detectives Martin Welborn and Al Mackay investigate the Hollywood murder of a movie mogul. As always, Wambaugh creates a fascinating portrait of police work.

Currently, we're being paid a 19th visit by our old friend Travis McGee, courtesy of John D. MacDonald's latest effort, **Free Fall in Crimson** (Harper & Row, 246 pp., $10.95). McGee is, of course, still living aboard his beloved houseboat, the *Busted Flush*, but now he's got a new girl, Anne Renzetti, to accompany him on a trail of unsolved murders that leads to a movie set in Iowa where *Free Fall* is being filmed. MacDonald at his reliable best.

With obvious parallels to a much-publicized, real-life Manhattan case, Beth Gutcheon's **Still Missing** (G.P. Putnam's, 336 pp., $11.95) describes the anguish endured by a family whose young son disappears off the streets of Boston. As with Judith Rossner's *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, the similarities raise a queasy question: Is the author capitalizing on the misfortunes of others? Gutcheon, however, writes with sufficient empathy to render the question moot.



"And then, after many years of business failures, Bertram finally made his fortune selling signs to the postal system that said, 'Sorry, this window closed.'"

Short Stories

Several noteworthy collections of short stories have appeared recently, by established names and newcomers alike. For those who enjoy tracing the arc of a well-respected career, **The Collected Stories of Elizabeth Bowen** (Alfred A. Knopf, 783 pp., $17.95) provides a perfect opportunity. This volume, the first complete gathering of Bowen's work, includes 79 stories, the labor of four decades. Also of interest are **The Stories of Elizabeth Spenser** (Doubleday, 429 pp., $14.95) and **The Collected Stories of Caroline Gordon** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 352 pp., $17.95). Both books chronicle the ascent of the modern-Southern short story, and taken together they could satiate the enthusiasts who made last year's Eudora Welty collection a best seller. Indeed, Welty has provided the introduction to the Spenser book.

Among our younger writers, the short-story form appears to be undergoing a renaissance. Two books by less familiar names have drawn high praise

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of late. Mark Helprin's **Ellis Island and Other Stories** (Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, 196 pp., $10.95) rewards the reader with complicated language and equally complicated characters, ranging from turn-of-the-century immigrants to snowbound Vermont children. Happily, Helprin is more than a stylist; he is a storyteller, too.

Raymond Carver's **What We Talk About When We Talk About Love** (Alfred A. Knopf, 159 pp., $9.95) displays a spare prose that matches the starkness of the American lives described in these 17 stories. Be warned: These tales are bitter and biting, and they will probably infuriate as many readers as they please.

Carver and Helprin have also contributed to **Prize Stories of the Seventies: From the O. Henry Awards**, edited by William Abrahams (Doubleday, 404 pp., $12.95, hardcover; Washington Square Press, 510 pp., $4.95, softcover). This greatest hits collection features fiction by Saul Bellow, John Updike, Renata Adler, John Sayles, Cynthia Ozick, Donald Barthelme, and John Cheever, among others. With the fanciful flights of Woody Allen juxtaposed with the lyrical language of Harold Brodkey, the compilation demonstrates the scope and substance of quality short fiction produced in a decade when the form was constantly declared on the verge of extinction. Anyone looking for a reintroduction to the genre might well consider this all-star gathering.

Our favorite collection of the season, however, is Laurie Colwin's **The Lone Pilgrim** (Alfred A. Knopf, 211 pp., $9.95). Colwin writes with uncommon good sense and good humor about the ever-changing configurations of modern romance. In the title story, the always-a-bridesmaid narrator begins her tale: "I have been the house pet to several families: friendly, cheerful, good with children...." These 13 stories are at times heartwarming, at times heartbreaking, and always perceptive. Colwin weds the traditional fiction of manners—love, marriage, misalliances—to a witty, contemporary sensibility. The result is remarkable.

Nonfiction

A bounty of of memoirs has arrived in recent months, but we regard Jacobo Timerman's **Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number** (translated by Toby Talbot, Alfred A. Knopf, 164 pp., $10.95) as one of the most horrifying and powerful. Timerman, the Jewish editor of a liberal Argentinian newspaper, was dragged from his apartment in 1977, imprisoned, and tortured for two years. Only constant international protests buoyed him above the wave that swept away other prisoners whose names went unrecorded, whose stories were never told. Timerman did escape, but his message is frightening and urgent: The unimaginable not only *can* happen; it *is* happening.

An interesting companion to Timer-

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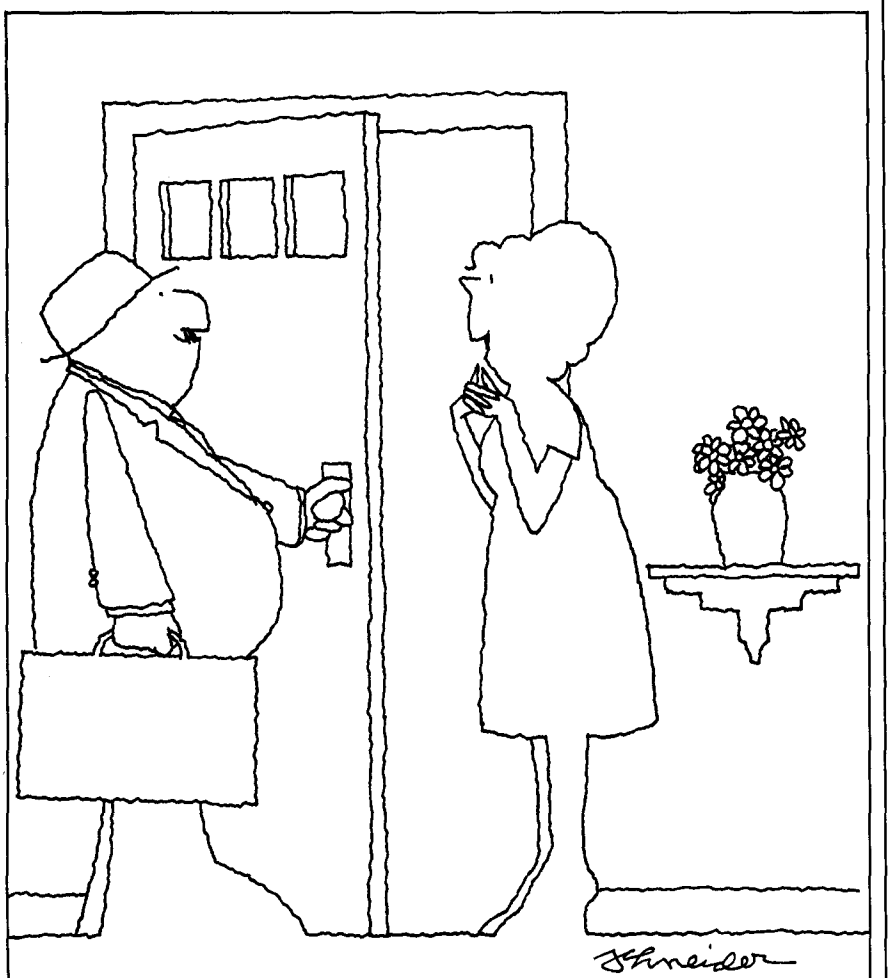
man's book is **The Terror Network: The Secret War of International Terrorism**, by Claire Sterling (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 357 pp. $13.95). A well-written and thoroughly researched account, *The Terror Network* exposes the underbelly of dêtente: the Soviet Union's sponsorship of international terrorists. What Sterling has done is follow the pattern of events that seems to lead inexorably toward Moscow.

A pair of offbeat memoirs by young authors may appeal to those readers looking for lighter material. David Owen, a 25-year-old New Yorker blessed with a youthful face, spent four months impersonating a public high school student, and he recounts this nightmare in **High School** (The Viking Press, 263 pp., $12.95). His report on remedial schoolwork, guidance counselors, sock hops, and other trials of growing up is compelling and comic. We can thank Owen for an unusual, perhaps even daring piece of investigative reporting.

Joel Agee has written a less outrageous but no less provocative memoir about his youth. **Twelve Years: An American Boyhood in East Berlin** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 324 pp., $14.95) examines how adolescent rebellion manifests itself in Communist East Germany. The son of novelist and film critic James Agee, the author settled in East Berlin at the age of eight with his mother and stepfather. For Agee, rebellion involved becoming a devout Stalinist at a time when his stepfather and friends were fast losing their faith in the Party. The novelty of his experiences combined with Agee's unpretentious style makes this a fine literary accomplishment.



"Henry! I can tell by the twinkle in your eyes—you're wearing your red mini-briefs."

Literary biography of a different sort is available in **Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters, 1917-1961** (Charles Scribner's Sons, 948 pp., $27.50). Hemingway explicitly stated that he never wanted his personal correspondence to be published. He considered his letters "often libellous, always indiscreet, often obscene, and many of them could make great trouble." They certainly make good reading, misspellings intact. Edited by Carlos Baker, these 600 letters culled from an estimated 6,000, reveal a writer strikingly different from the Macho Man people have come to expect. As these letters indicate, Hemingway didn't simply put himself into his books. He was a conscious writer who understood the transformations necessitated by art.

We also call to your attention a trio of biographies. If, by some slight of misfortune, you have never encountered Saki's short stories, sit down with a well-written, illuminating biography of one of England's premiere satirists: **Saki: A Life of Hector Hugh Munro** by A.J. Langguth (Simon & Schuster, 288 pp., $13.95). Raised by wicked aunts, Hector's childhood is straight out of Dickens. Amazingly, he bore no outward resentment. "He learned instead to humiliate his oppressors in a dozen ways on the printed page." The biography includes six previously uncollected stories by this slashing wit.

Anglophiles unable to snare an invitation to the Royal Event this summer may find some solace in **Duchess: The Story of Wallis Warfield Windsor** (Lit-

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tle, Brown & Company, 344 pp., $15.95). Stephen Birmingham, erstwhile pretender to the role of social historian and the author of *Our Crowd*, has thrown together a gossipy, bitchy, and entertaining biography of the Duchess of Windsor. The portrait isn't at all flattering: Plain Bessie Wallis Warfield from the wrong side of Baltimore's tracks skillfully scratches her way past two marriages and into the King's heart. With all the fresh dirt, you might think that Birmingham has broken new ground on what H.L. Mencken called "the greatest story since the Resurrection." He hasn't, but the book is still fun.

Moving over to the Mediterranean, Maria Callas buffs can put on a recording of *Lucia*, settle into a comfortable chair, and get lost in the hot-blooded intrigues of the famous diva as described in **Maria Callas: The Woman Behind the Legend** by Arianna Stassinopoulos (Simon & Schuster, 367 pp., $13.95). The author has written the most authentic and story-studded version to date of Callas's life. Here are the mentors, the famous opera houses, the husbands, the lovers, and of course, Aristotle Onassis in a class all his own. Well-researched and often riveting, this is an ideal book for opera fans and glitter junkies.

Finally, for the junkiest glitter of all, we recommend Miss Piggy, that Muppet of great ambition and greater girth. Currently on view in the film *The Great Muppet Caper*, the *cochon dorée* has demonstrated the breadth of her talents by writing a book for her fans (of which she is, of course, the greatest). **Miss Piggy's Guide to Life** (Alfred A. Knopf, 113 pp., $12.95) contains advice on entertaining (do it), exercising (don't), and other dilemmas of modern life. It's as breezy and one-of-a-kind as the great lady herself. Here, for instance, is a beauty tip: "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and it may be necessary from time to time to give a stupid or misinformed beholder a black eye." Miss Piggy has a rare talent for unearthing such truffles. ■

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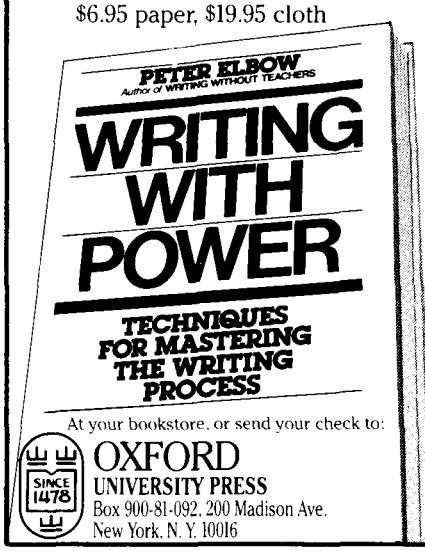

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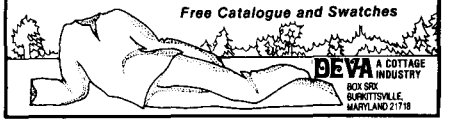

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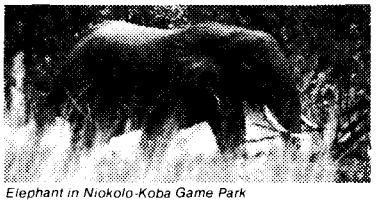
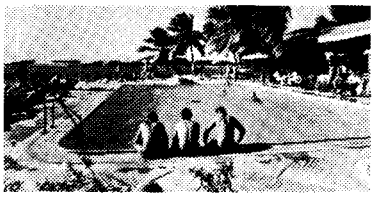

Elephant in Niokolo-Koba Game Park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LANGUAGE

Thomas H. Middleton

Less Is More

In the *Britannica Book of English Usage*, Dr. Lois DeBakey has a piece called "English Today: Are We Speaking in Tongues?" In it, she criticizes, among other things, the use of verbal deadwood. "When someone says *appears to be suggestive of the possibility that*," she writes, "he means only *suggests* but has used seven unnecessary words to say it. *In close proximity to* means *near*; *in view of the fact that* means *since*, *has the capability of* means *can*; *produce an inhibitory effect on* means *inhibit*; *in short supply* means *scarce*; *it is the opinion of the author* means *I believe*; *present a picture similar to* means *resemble*; *in the majority of cases* means *usually*; *give consideration to* means *consider*; and *serves the function of being* means *is*—nothing more. In language, as in mathematics, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line; remembering that principle will make our speech and writing not only more direct but more forceful as well."

About half an hour after reading Dr. DeBakey's article, I caught part of Hugh Downs's television show, *Over Easy*, which I think usually deals with the lives of elderly people. The show was past its midpoint when I tuned in, so I don't know what had gone on before I started watching, but Mr. Downs was doing a story about an attractive lady in her late middle years—a nun, I believe, but wearing mufti, as I guess most nuns do these days. She had evidently gone back to college and found to her surprise that she was able to keep up with young college students on their own intellectual level. This shouldn't have surprised her. She was not only thoroughly charming but obviously very bright, and she has been around a lot longer than they. Her intelligence coupled with her superior fund of experience and knowledge naturally made her more than a match for most of her younger classmates.

But I think she was corrupted, at least in part, by her collegiate experience. There was a heart-warming scene showing her accompanying a 91-year-old man to Mass. She goes to Mass with him regularly. She said that the old man was really terribly shy, but that he felt "in a nonthreatening situation with me."

I feel sure that, before her return to college, she would have said "He's really terribly shy, but he likes me," or "he trusts me," or "he's comfortable with me," or "we get along well." I bet it never would have occurred to her to say anything as cumbersome as "he feels in a nonthreatening situation with me."

We need to confront "confrontation situations."

But that is obviously the sort of thing people are learning to say in college these days, and in spite of all her intelligence and experience, she picked up the style. It isn't unlikely that she had to be able to say "in a nonthreatening situation" without giggling to get a passing grade.

"Situation" is one of our most overused words. Not long ago, I heard a psychologist on the radio advise a listener who had called in, "I think you're going to have to put yourself in a confrontation situation with him."

To paraphrase Dr. De Bakey, when someone says *put yourself in a confrontation situation with* he means only *confront*, but has used six unnecessary words to say it.

Threatening situations and *nonthreatening situations, confrontation situations, domination situations, education situations*, and so on, are most probably legacies from psychology and sociology.

I'm only speculating, or putting myself in a speculation situation, as I haven't taken a psychology course in about 35 years, but it is not hard to imagine a psychology professor suggesting an experiment in which "we will take 100 random adults, put 50 of them in a threatening situation and the other 50 in a nonthreatening situation. Then, we will give all of them these questionnaires and try to ascertain the correlation between the responses and the threateningness or nonthreateningness of the situation."

Much psychological experimentation demands the setting up of artificial situations, and it is not surprising that the jargon spills over from these artificial situations into real life. As a way of speaking, though, I find it frothy and insubstantial, suggesting a removal some degrees away from corporeal reality. It is bloodless. *Putting yourself in a confrontation situation with him* evokes cardboard cutouts, whereas *confronting him* can get the adrenalin flowing.

I recall that, those many years ago when my classmates and I "took psych," we said things like "looking at the whole gestalt," but we got over it.

I feel sure that it won't be long before that nice nun will be quite herself again, and will come home to phrases like "He trusts me," and "He likes me"—the shortest distance between two points. ■

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Peter Caranicas

Treasures on Videodisc

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Linton Park's "Flax Scutching Bee" from a laser disc on art appreciation.

Abandoned to lowest-common-denominator programming, abused by the network race for ratings, and abashed by the media mediocrity that surrounds them, lovers of culture and the performing arts can rejoice at last. Television is on the threshold of fundamental changes that will put viewer disenfranchisement to an end.

As long as only three major networks control most TV programming, they will strive to outdo each other in appealing to mass tastes, offering strikingly similar line-ups of situation comedies, action-adventure series, and made-for-TV movies. Two technologies now seem about to bring network control to an end and to transform the age of channel scarcity into one of channel abundance. The first of these, cable television, is in the process of spawning new, specialized programming networks. No fewer than four of these networks will be devoted to cultural programming of the type now seen occasionally on public TV. This will be the focus of a future column.

The second technology is the videodisc. Videodiscs resemble phonograph records. When placed in a videodisc player hooked up to any TV set, they play whatever program is recorded on them—from *Casablanca* to *Star Trek*.

Two videodisc systems are on the market today, with a third to be launched early next year. Unfortunately, the systems are all incompatible, which means that none can play the discs of the other two. Each system has its own catalogue of program titles, and each catalogue does or will include a healthy number of cultural discs among all the recent feature films, classical movies, and children's and instructional programs.

The first of these disc systems—known as the optical format because a laser beam is used to "read" the disc's surface—has been sold by Magnavox under the name Magnavision since late 1978 in selected cities, and more recently under the LaserDisc brand name by Pioneer. Culturally programmed discs playable on the optical system include titles like *The Art Awareness Collection* (an art appreciation course spotlighting paintings hanging in Washington's National Gallery), *Bolëro* (Zubin Mehta conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Ravel's work), and *Le Corbusier* (a documentary on the French architect's buildings, narrated by his collaborator Carlos Vilardebo).

The second videodisc system, known as CED (for Capacitance Electronic Disc, which refers to the player's needle-in-groove technology), was launched nationally by RCA in March. Several other manufacturers will market compatible CED players by year end. Anyone thumbing through RCA's program catalogue will discover, among the *Saturday Night Fever*s and the Super Bowl highlights, the following high-brow selection: *Hamlet* (the famous British screen adaptation, with Laurence Olivier), *Romeo and Juliet* (the Zeffirelli film), *An Evening With the Royal Ballet* (a documentary focusing on the Fonteyn-Nureyev collaboration), *Henry V* (the 1944 classic film, with Olivier starring and directing), and *Giselle* (Nureyev again, this time with Lynn Seymour).

The third videodisc system, which will appear in January 1982, is known as VHD (for Video High Density). VHD players will be sold by General Electric, JVC, and Panasonic. A spokesman says the initial 120-program selection "will include cultural material." Moreover, he adds, the VHD people are talking to ballet and opera companies about possible original productions for videodisc release.

Clearly, the videodisc companies are now testing the waters with various types of programs. The future of culture on disc depends on two factors: The videodisc itself must succeed, ending up in enough households to make the selling of specialized programs economically viable; and customers must demonstrate some interest in discs containing drama, symphonies, ballet, and opera. If both requirements are met, consumers will one day be able to find on videodiscs the same richness and variety of culture they now get from books, galleries, and performances. ■

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FILM

Judith Crist

Blake Edwards's Revenge

GARY HERRY

Julie Andrews, surrounded by clowns, again triumphs as a comedienne in *S.O.B.*

Revenge is sweet but even sweeter when one can look back with laughter rather than in anger. And when the backward look becomes topical, by intent or coincidence, the pleasures and rewards are enhanced for the bystanders. *Vide* Blake Edwards's **S.O.B.** —and I do mean *vide*.

Edwards began working in Hollywood at the age of 25, making his debut as actor-writer with *Panhandle* in 1947, working up to writer-director in the Fifties, and then adding producer to his credits. With a penchant —and remarkable gift—for comedy, he nevertheless varies his projects: His direction of *Days of Wine and Roses* in 1962 was followed, for example, by his writing as well as directing *The Pink Panther* in 1963. His forte, however, has been comedy, with three *Pink Panther* sequels and *10* providing him with smashing success in the Seventies.

But there have been misses along the way, perhaps most memorably *Darling Lili* in 1970, when rumor was rife that the studio was "dumping" that multimillion-dollar bore and Edwards was unbankable. He who banks most has the last laugh, and Edwards has saved his for *S.O.B.*, a very funny "once upon a time" fable about a producer who made a $30-million flop, tried but failed to kill himself, and finally solved the problem, if not for himself at least for the studio. And in this year of *Heaven's Gate*, the story of studio manipulations involving moguls, agents, stars, and private-secretaries-on-the-rise seems deliciously relevant. *Heaven's Gate*, you'll recall, was simply cut from a three-and-three-quarter-hour disaster to a two-and-a-half-hour flop that seemed to run six hours. *S.O.B.* is the story of how a $30-million spectacular musical failure is turned into a smashingly successful $40-million porno flick (the new lyrics, it's noted, are "prurient—but profound") by having an "erotic"nursery scene with a climactic baring of the star's bosom.

The title does not refer to that heredity epithet—though s.o.b.s. rule Edwards's cinema scene, with virtually no redeeming or redeemed characters on hand. It's explained as "Standard Operating Bullshit" in the moviemaking world. And Edwards's view thereof, its blackness brightened by laughter, its cynicism leavened by wit, makes for the kind of social satire that rarely gets to the screen these days: It's a world wherein one of the halfway (but only halfway) decent guys notes that "There's not a man among us who doesn't keep a hair shirt as a permanent part of his wardrobe"; wherein there's a $100-million in gross in view if a movie can offer "America's G-rated sweetheart in an X-rated nude scene"; and where a man can forgive his killer with "It's okay, Harrigan: This could mean another $10 million at the box office."

The plot bursts with twists, turns, and perceptive detail as husbands, wives, columnists, and wheeler-dealers go for the jugular in deals and in bed.

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The star-studded cast, listed on screen after Julie Andrews and William Holden simply in alphabetical order, leaves us with the suspicion that a lot of the work was a labor of love for these old Hollywood hands. Andrews (whose striptease scene in *Darling Lili* played havoc with the hackles of her *Sound of Music* fans) once again proves herself a sophisticated comedienne as the producer's wife and America's Peter Pan, with Richard Mulligan, master of neuroses, as the producer-director-writer. Robert Preston, the local Doctor Feelgood (always at the ready with pills and hypodermics), William Holden, a studio trouble-shooter, and Robert Webber as Mulligan's agent are the halfway decent folk, the Three Muscatels with hair shirts. The total indecents include Shelley Winters as Andrews's agent; Stuart Margolin as Andrews's private secretary; Loretta Swit as a columnist; and Robert Vaughan as the studio head, with Larry Hagman his chief honcho. They're all at home with Edwards's stiletto-sharp dialogue, sudden slapstick, and sly suggestion that loyalty and devotion are for puppy dogs and drunks.

In contrast, of course, are the "ordinary" people, dealt with in engrossing and tender detail in Pascal Thomas's **Heart to Heart**, a warm-hearted French film about a petit-bourgeois family's three daughters and how they grew to womanhood. This is Thomas's eighth film; only his 1974 *Don't Cry With Your Mouth Full* and his 1976 *Les Zozos* have been seen here, both perceptive comedies about teenagers, pleasant and low-keyed.

"I feel sad and I want to tell the story of my family," his heroine, Brigitte, announces, and we follow her through her childhood and adolescent memories, along with her two sisters, their firm-handed mother and soft-hearted father, from the suburbs to Paris, where all five come of age. The eldest daughter, Pierrette, fulfills herself in motherhood and a yearning to be a "young" grandmother; the youngest, Florence, a glamour-seeker, finds a Prince Charming and misery; Brigitte, the only one of the three to refuse to marry the man who makes her pregnant, is also the only one to seek or find a career.

Thomas's strength is his recreation of universal experiences—the quarrels, the solidarities, the pretenses, jealousies, and affections that bind children and parents—above all, the memories that linger, the moments of intergenerational revelation. The film engrosses us in shared experience, the pleasures of everyday incidents, the minor and major tragedies, and high and low comedy of family life. Anne Caudry is a charming grown-up Brigitte; Laurence Ligneres is intriguingly enigmatic as the mother who endures and then has a fling for herself, and Daniel Ceccaldi is very appealing as the female-dominated father whose final problem is that he'll never know if his runaway wife returned for him or the built-in kitchen. The gentleness and sweetness of Thomas's directorial approach never cloys but makes a mark on the heart.

The heroine's sister in *Heart to Heart* becomes an extra in a TV commercial.

Again in contrast, there's tough tense adventure in Richard Marquand's **Eye of the Needle**, a first-rate screen adaptation (by Stanley Mann) of Ken Follett's dazzling best seller. This rousing World War II spy story, set in the British Isles and filmed there, provides not only an action-packed thriller but also a vehicle for another brilliantly understated performance by Donald Sutherland.

Sutherland, fresh from his "ordinary" father in *Ordinary People*, triumphs again with his impersonation of Faber, the German spy whose speed with a stiletto has earned him the code name of The Needle. Faber's mission is to learn the invasion plans of the Allied forces massing in East Anglia. With British intelligence in hot pursuit, he gets the information and goes to transmit it to a waiting submarine off a coastal island inhabited by a crippled ex-fighter pilot, his wife, their four-year-old child, and an aged shepherd. And on Storm Island—as Follett's readers will know but find undiminished by their knowledge—comes a simply stunning confrontation and romance that reduces the war to a one-on-one encounter.

Sutherland, giving a multidimensional performance, is complemented by an excellent cast, with Kate Nelligan (whom Americans saw most recently as the star of Masterpiece Theatre's *Therese Raquin*) superb as the love-starved woman who turns heroine by instinct; Christopher Cazenove as the embittered husband; and Ian Bannen as the British scholar-turned-agent. The director, Marquand, a Briton known here through television for his *Search for the Nile* and *Birth of the Beatles*, sustains tension all the way with that concern for character as well as action that gives a spy story its distinction.■

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THEATER

Stanley Kauffmann

Very Little Foxes

I'm so excited I can hardly stand it," said the woman behind me. The lights had dimmed, the curtain was about to rise on **The Little Foxes** with Elizabeth Taylor. I liked the woman's remark, her excitement—which the audience shared—at the start of a play. That sense of trembly anticipation is rare in our theater these days, and even if it has to come from glamour, well, glamour is an ancient and venerable factor in the theater, not automatically to be despised.

And with her first appearance, with her appearances throughout, Taylor fulfills the glamour expectation. Her face is lovely, she's well wigged and costumed, and though her bosom is now more of an international phenomenon than a personal attribute, she conveys it and the rest of herself around the stage with some poise, some good use of her stardom.

But the glamour is not enough. Taylor's first performance on the stage seems to have been judged by the fact that it's her first performance on the stage. By that gentle criterion, she does some things passably. She moves with an attempt at line. She knows how to listen fairly well. Although her hands look surprisingly large, she uses them with some deftness and restraint. But an actor's power to sustain a long scene needs more than our wonder that a film star, used to short takes, is actually playing a long scene. To use a camera term, Taylor seems repeatedly to go in and out of focus during scenes. Worse, in the climaxes, her force comes from her throat, not her spirit; the result is only noise. A Martian, ignorant of Taylor's film past, seeing her for the first time here, might wonder how an actress of her age could have developed so little technique and could have become a star with so little ability to take command.

Lillian Hellman's play, first done in 1939, is about a wealthy Southern fin-de-siècle family who wants to be wealthier—the Hubbards, consisting of Regina Hubbard Giddens, her brothers Ben and Oscar, Oscar's son Leo. Differing from them are Regina's husband Horace, their daughter Alexandra, Oscar's wife, Birdie. All the latter are Good; all the Hubbards are Bad, rapacious, not linked by their greed but scheming against one another because of it. A few commentators have wondered why Taylor chose Regina for her theater debut, a role without a romantic or appealing touch, a woman made of aggressions, sometimes gloved, sometimes naked. They forget that several of Taylor's most effective film roles—such as in *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Reflections in a Golden Eye*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*—depended on her (and her director's) ability to work up a clawing hysteria. Taylor's career has relied less on audience seduction than any other film-star beauty I can think of. (Bette Davis was never a beauty of that rank.) The contrast between Taylor's violet-eyed softness and those rages brought her considerable success; she has merely chosen a stage role that carries the contrast further. (She may carry it around the country, on tour—possibly also to England. Plans are brewing.)

Glamour is not to be despised—but glamour alone is not enough.

By luck or design, the actors around Taylor have been chosen so as not to show her up. The one competent performance is by Novella Nelson as the maid, Addie. Regina's bullied aristocratic sister-in-law, Birdie, is played by Maureen Stapleton, who suggests a risen kitchen maid more than a fallen blueblood. Stapleton has long ceased trying to act; she has become a beggar for pathos, like a dog sitting up and begging for biscuits, and she does it with increasing clumsiness. Anthony Zerbe as Ben, Joe Ponazecki as Oscar, Dennis Christopher as Leo are all slovenly and inadequate; and they illustrate the decline in American acting. If you think the word "decline" is just the maundering of an old playgoer, see the 1941 film of *The Little Foxes* in which those three roles are played by Charles Dingle, Carl Benton Reid, and Dan Duryea, and Birdie is played by Patricia Collinge, all of whom were in the original Broadway production. The invalid Horace in this revival is Tom Aldredge. As is often the case, Aldredge's acting is so thin as to be nearly invisible: I'm never quite sure whether he's on stage or off. Alexandra is done by Ann Talman, a colorless young woman who, says the program, is a student of Austin Pendleton, the director.

Talman and Christopher are the second and third Pendleton students to make their Broadway debuts in a Pendleton production this season. (The first was Patricia Cray Lloyd who was equally unimpressive in *John Gabriel Borkman* at Circle in the Square.) The idea of Pendleton as acting teacher—I've seen a lot of his acting as well as his directing—is depressing, and his direction of *The Little Foxes* does little to reassure. His work here apparently consisted of giving Taylor some confidence, devising stagy patterns of stage movement for the whole cast, and interrupting those movements with stilted groupings as for an old-time photo. The overall impression of his method is of

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actors obeying orders to move and occasionally obeying orders to stop, to have their pictures taken.

If Pendleton's ineptness needed confirmation, it comes with the final curtain. Regina has connived at her invalid husband's death, has bested her brothers in business skullduggery, is well on her way to riches and power. She starts upstairs to her bedroom, then says (quite incredibly, by the way) to her daughter: "Would you—would you like to sleep in my room tonight?" The daughter replies, "Are you afraid, Mama?" The stage directions say:

> Regina does not answer, but moves slowly out of sight. Addie *then* comes to Alexandra, squeezes her arm with affection and pride, *then* starts for the other lamp, as the curtain falls. [Italics added.]

Pendleton makes Addie move *before* Regina is out of sight: Thus he obscures the sting of the daughter's line in Regina, and he muddies Taylor's star exit up the stairs.

Hellman—regardless of the fact that Regina's last-second qualm is unbelievable—has enough stage wile to have ordered it otherwise, just as she was wily enough to construct a pathos number for Birdie in Act Three that virtually flashes its own "Applause" sign at her exit. But the play as a whole is monochromatic. Once its premise is set, it's just financial ploy and counterploy among the Hubbards and against Horace. Fundamentally, nothing grows or changes; it's just a continual barrage of tricks on more or less the same plane until it's over. And even then it's over only because the final curtain comes down: Ben has suspicions about Horace's death, which means that, if the curtain were to rise again, the play might still be going on. (Seven years later Hellman wrote a three-act prologue, *Another Part of the Forest*, which showed that, in effect, *The Little Foxes* had been going on 20 years before its first curtain rose.)

Because of the two-dimensional characters and the assorted contrivances, the drama never really entails more than the snarlings of a dog fight. But Hellman wants her play to have resonance, so she pastes on her own aggrandizements. Says Ben, in his last scene:

> There are hundreds of Hubbards sitting in rooms like this throughout the country. All their names aren't Hubbard, but they are all Hubbards and they will own this country some day.

And just before the end, the 17-year-old Alexandra tells her mother that she'll be fighting her uncle "as hard as he'll be fighting... someplace where people don't just stand around and watch." Don't question where the girl got that impulse or what the line means; just observe Hellman's considerateness. She includes with her play hints for college-senior essays on its themes.

These final fake pronouncements don't deepen the gimcrack play, don't make it any more than reverse sentimentality, a bath in theatrical vice instead of theatrical virtue. Not long ago a revival of Hellman's *Watch on the Rhine* revealed it—still more clearly—as a tawdry insult, through melodrama, to its theme of anti-fascisim. *The Little Foxes*, though less clankily constructed, is equally superficial in the treatment of its theme, American materialism throttling the American dream. The quotation marks plead to be printed in acid when one refers to these plays as native "classics." ■

MARTHA SWOPE

The actors (clockwise from Elizabeth Taylor) who seem to have been chosen so as not to show Taylor up: Humbert Allen Astredo, Maureen Stapleton, Ann Talman, Joe Seneca, Novella Nelson, Dennis Christopher, Anthony Zerbe, and Joe Ponazecki.

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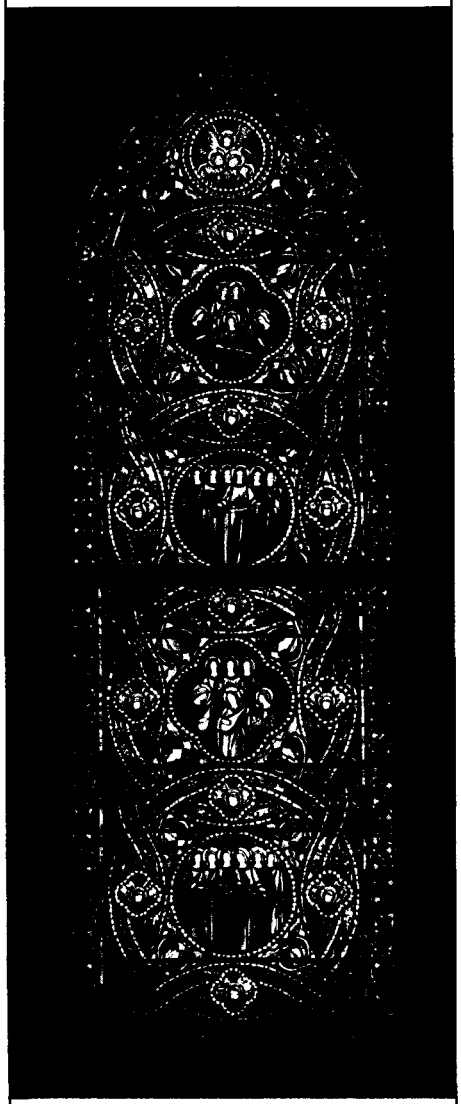
ART

Carter Ratcliff

Tiffany's Legacy

The Tiffanys, father Charles and son Louis Comfort, have exercised an astonishing influence over American ideas of amenity. In 1866, the elder Tiffany devised the pronged setting for diamond solitaires that is still standard —and of course bears his name. It was he who introduced the English standard for sterling silver to America, thereby giving proper place settings a weightiness that must be measured on a social not a laboratory scale. **Louis Comfort Tiffany**, in turn, designed those glass lampshades that seem to be in a permanent state of opalescent, Art Nouveau revival. These and the endlessly varied vases, bowls, pitchers, and stained-glass windows that the younger Tiffany also designed give us our clearest images of domestic luxury in turn-of-the-century America.



Tiffany's "Medallion Window," ca. 1892.

The Tiffany look has not been uninterruptedly popular. For all the underlying sympathies between Art Nouveau and Art Deco, the latter's streamlined gleam had sent Louis Comfort Tiffany's designs into eclipse by the time of his death in 1933. Now the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco has opened an exhibition of nearly 250 objects from his studios, all of them selected from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh F. McKean, who bequeathed it to the Charles Hosmer Morse Foundation of Winter Park, Florida.

The San Francisco exhibit helps put the younger Tiffany's uniquely influential career in proper perspective. When he was still in his teens, Louis Comfort announced to his father that his interest was art rather than manufacture and merchandising. He would create paintings, not design luxury goods. After study with the preeminent American landscapist, George Inness, he went to Paris for instruction in the studio of Léon Bailly. Tiffany's early work played such confident variations on Hudson River School themes that he was made an Associate of the National Academy at the age of 23. At 31, he decided to give up his professional career as an artist and devote himself entirely to design. Yet, as the de Young exhibition shows, he continued to paint. Over the seasons, Hudson River School influences gave way to those of Impressionism, especially in its domesticated American forms.

As a painter, Tiffany always produced elegant variations on the initiatives of others. Only in design were his high-style instincts innovative. An understanding of this may have provided one motive for his decision to stop painting professionally. He mentioned another motive himself—money. When he was gathering several colleagues into a design group to be called Associated Artists, he extended this invitation to his friend Candace Wheeler: "You had better join us. It is the real thing, you know; a business, not a philanthropy or any amateur educational scheme. We are going after the money there is in art, but the art will be there, all the same." Painting may have been the finest of the fine arts, but it was a chancy business at best. So on to the manufacture of salable goods.

In 1881, the Associated Artists redid the interiors of Mark Twain's mansion in Hartford, Connecticut. The following year, President Chester A. Arthur asked the group to spruce up the White House. The fee was small but the prestige immeasurable, so they took the job. Hugh F. McKean's recent book, *The "Lost" Treasures of Louis Comfort Tiffany*, gives an ample account of before and after. Evidently the White House looked like the wrong side of the tracks before Arthur moved in. Tiffany and his friends favored patterned wallpaper, heavily ornamented but severely angular furniture, and sudden, dramatic expanses of emptiness. With especially adventurous clients, these emptinesses were grand and the contrasting patches of detail a bit eye-boggling—intricately figured wall

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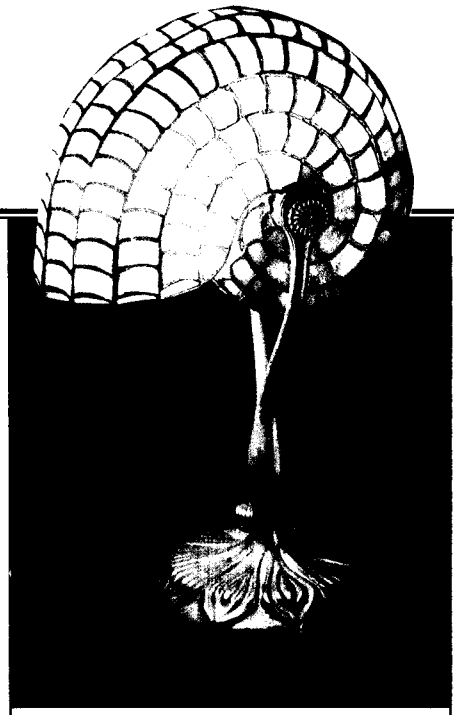
hangings over elaborately curlicued wallpaper designs, for example.

Among the equals who made up the Associated Artists, Tiffany was always the leader. Over the years, he reorganized his business affairs several times, always giving himself more effective control and a larger production capacity. In 1894, he became a director of his father's firm, Tiffany & Company. When Charles died in 1902, Louis Comfort became a vice-president. The son's own organization, Tiffany Studios, remained independent, with a showroom of its own, though most of the Studio products could be seen at the Fifth Avenue shop of Tiffany & Company as well. And he continued to design interiors, nearly all of which have disappeared in the course of demolition or subsequent remodeling. For the most part, only photographs remain. Even Laurelton Hall, Tiffany's mansion in Oyster Bay, Long Island, has burned to the ground.

The designer's current prestige rests less on a vision of domestic elegance than on the details—vases, lampshades, desk sets—with which that elegance was to be accented. To look at one of his sinuous, exquisitely unnatural forms in Favrile glass (a shimmering substance of his own invention) is to see a self-sufficient work of the designer's art. At the same time, it is to see an emblem of social and aesthetic aspirations that are, simply, beyond us now. Interiors can be lush, these days. They can be expensive, but they never flaunt their style with the absolute self-confidence of a Tiffany interior. The designer ensconced his most favored clients in a fantasy of the utterly original, of a return to high style's Garden of Eden. That cannot be recaptured.

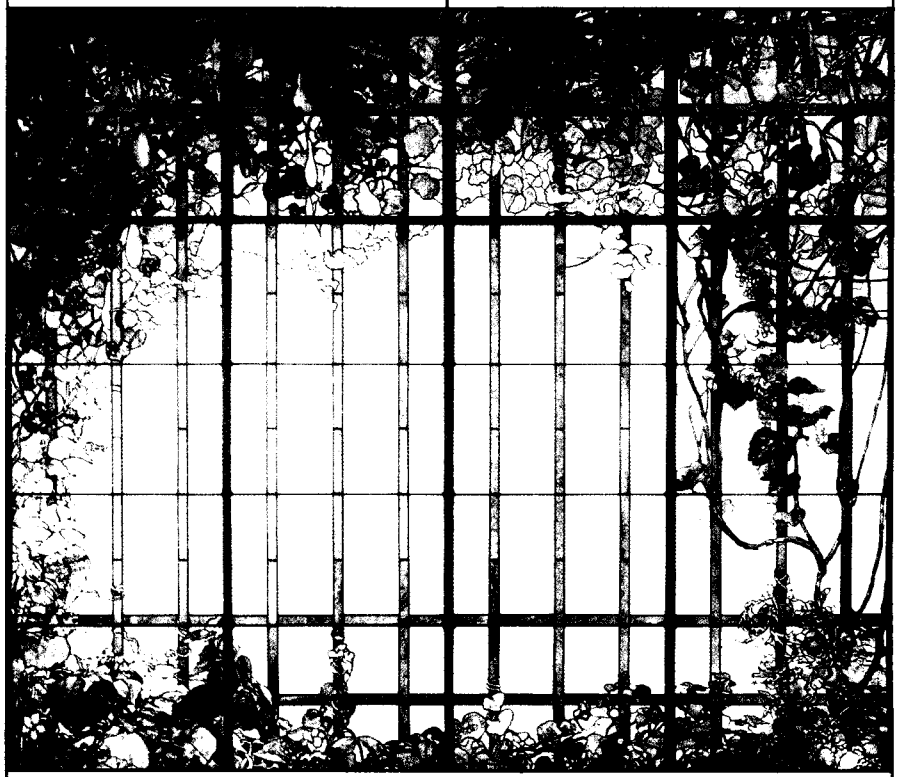
Nonetheless, this exhibition is rife with pleasures. If the sight of fake-Tiffany lampshades had jaded your eye, the cure is here. Donald L. Stover, who organized this show, has included two dozen of these bronze and glass extravaganzas. The best of them break up their spots of glowing color into patterns so artificial they suggest a new order of nature—one in which the blind forces of evolution have joined with extremes of tastefulness. Tiffany's version of Art Nouveau's writhing, organic



The "Nautilus Lamp," patented in 1899.

forms is always energetic, yet never exudes that aura of tendril-like sexuality that envelops so much French and Belgian Art Nouveau. Tiffany knew his clients for the Victorian Americans that they were—and that he was, as well.

His designs are often exotic, hardly ever lurid. Some have entered the vocabulary of American form forever. See especially the flowing, subtly irregular "Floriform" vases, with their translucent suggestions of sunlight caught in the petal of a flower; the bronze-based student lamp with its etched glass shade and its witty combination of the practical and the helplessly fragile (a student's dream); and of course his stained-glass windows. The contemporary world has no place for them, with their play of flat pattern and deep, shimmering light. When Tiffany turned to stained glass, it had become—quite literally—a pale imitation of its medieval self. With his technical finesse (always an essential ingredient of his aesthetic), he restored most if not all the medium's rich palette, and even added some colors unknown in the days of the Gothic cathedral. The greens he brings to the depiction of landscape often have the look of the never-before-seen. At their best, these windows have the intensity of dreams bursting into color. Many of them spend most of their time hidden away. Donald L. Stover has assembled more than 30 of them for this exhibition, where they give off as quietly dazzling a glow as they ever did in the sites for which they were intended. It is through these windows, if anywhere in this show, that one can sense Tiffany's vision in full. ■



Four door panels, ca. 1905, designed for the Heckscher residence in New York City.

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RECORDS

Stephen Wadsworth

Exquisite Von Stade

Twelve years ago **Frederica Von Stade** was plucked out of the Metropolitan Opera's national auditions before the finals. She was just too good. Within three seasons, having worked her way past the bit parts, she sang Hansel and Cherubino, then packed her bags and set off to expand her horizons. Her ineffable Cherubino—a dreamy, aristocratic adolescent—drew her to San Francisco, Paris, Glyndebourne, Salzburg, and the world of Solti, Karajan, Strehler, and Ponnelle where she belongs. Brilliantly managed, choosing repertoire with discernment and foresight, she has become one of our distinctive operatic and concert artists—never losing the fresh, tranquil, almost childlike response to her music that made her an irresistible auditioner.

Six years ago, Frederica Von Stade made her first solo record, *French Opera Arias* (CBS M-34206, $9.98). In this repertoire, her gentle mezzo soprano, exquisitely poised singing, and fluent French simply blend into the music. As the insouciant page boys of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* and Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, she rockets through intricate fiorituras to secure high C's, and phrase after phrase melts in her mouth. When she dips into the mesmerizing introspection of Shakespeare's enamored Béatrice, in an aria from Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*, time seems to stop at the words, "*Il m'en souvient...*" (I remember). This is a unique disc. The very least the French—and everyone else—could do was honor it with their highest recording prizes. In the five years since that album, Von Stade has recorded 14 complete operas, six solo recitals, and an assortment of masses and symphonic works for five major labels.

The operatic characters she has recorded and the personas she adopts in recital are mostly pensive girls (Cinderella and Mélisande) or coltish boys (Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Hansel). They all seem young, innocent, quietly accepting of pain. Sometimes Von Stade's reserve and detachment are alluring and fascinating, as in her stunning recording of *Pelléas et Mélisande* with Herbert Von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic (3-Angel SZX-3885, $29.94) or her uncanny Octavian (4-Philips 6707030, $39.92). Sometimes, as in many of her live and recorded recitals, this unreachability can anesthetize a song and annoy listeners who naturally expect a more specific personal statement from this most musical and musicianly of singers. Von Stade seems to connect strongly and simply with her characters, but she doesn't always share or explore those connections with her audience.

Von Stade makes her mark in the French repertoire, where her private world and not-of-this-earth sound are very much *chez eux*. Her latest release, a digitally recorded Ravel disc with the Boston Symphony (CBS IM-36665, $14.95), features a performance of *Shéhérazade* that holds its own in close comparison with recorded versions by Jennie Tourel, Régine Crespin, and Janet Baker, each equally at home in French music. Von Stade, never quite abandoning herself, floats through Tristan Klingsor's three poems of Asia with suggestive inscrutability—liquefying consonants, evoking hot, languid evenings with high pianissimos and delicious portamentos, fading in and out of human form. Her soft call of "*Entre!*" to the elusive hero of "L'Indifferent" is erotic in an utterly unselfconscious, almost childlike way.

In her recent recording of Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* (3-CBS M3-35910, $29.94), however, Von Stade's liquid consonants, unvarying tone, and never-ending rapturous line lead to some longueurs, abetted by conductor Raymond Leppard's uncalled-for efforts to enliven Monteverdi with anachronistic trombones and electric organs. Many of Von Stade's lines, so limpidly sung, need to be urgently declaimed, and she shies away from urgency. Yet her portrayal of Ulysses' long-suffering wife is promising, because in probing the love and pain of maturity for the first time Von Stade shows us a new dimension of her art.

Frederica Von Stade's voice is not large, and she can't refine it much further. The repertoire for the voice is limited, and she's already made a respectable dent and a lasting impression in it. How can she grow? Like the character in Schumann's song cycle *Frauenliebe und -leben*, she can live a woman's life and love and share her deepening sense of joy and sorrow with us. Then she'll be an artist who can never stop growing—even if she were to sing only one song. ■

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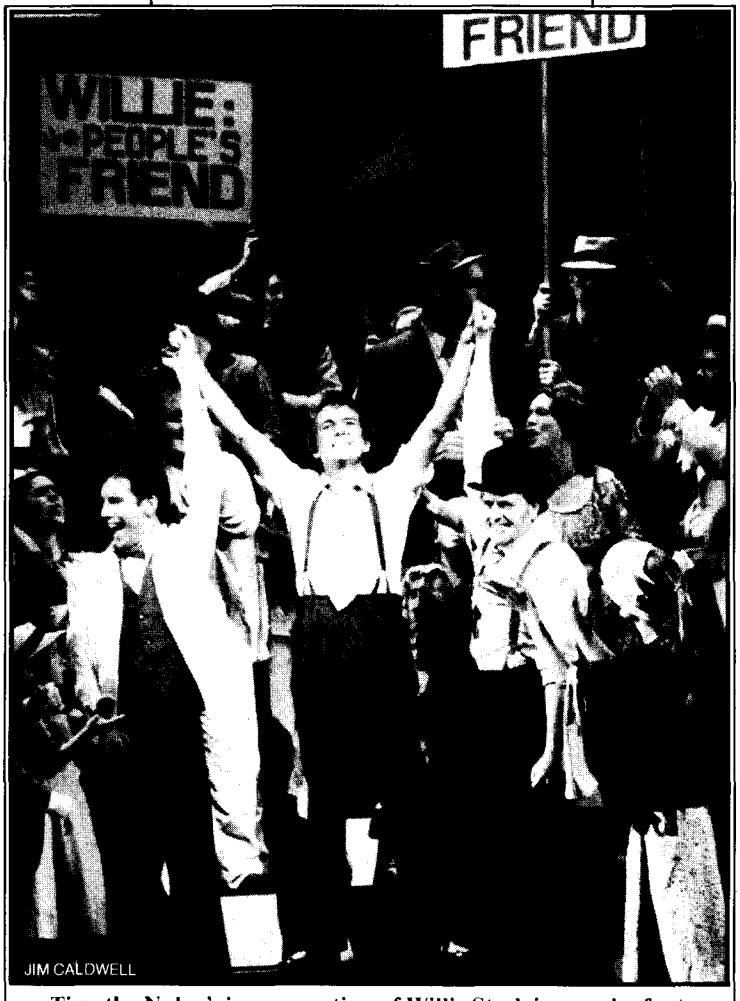
Irving Kolodin

The Star of "Willie Stark"

Willie Stark is the title of Carlisle Floyd's most mature score for the musical stage. The work, derived from Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, was recently seen in its premiere production at Houston's Jones Hall and at Washington's Kennedy Center, with Harold Prince as director. Floyd, Warren, Prince—these are all estimable names, but the new one most likely to be remembered from this production belongs to the young American baritone Timothy Nolen. His impersonation of Willie is a work of art.

Like Phyllis Curtin, who created the title role in *Susannah*, Floyd's first great success, Nolen's Willie is one to be held up for comparison to any future performer of the Huey Long-inspired part. The role requires something more than a good voice and a plausible physical resemblance to the political spellbinder assassinated at the age of 43. A singer must be able to impart the kind of magnetism that enabled this folk hero to enthrall his followers and roll over well-organized opposition. Nolen brings to the part a curious likeness to the young Leonard Bernstein, with a flashing smile as well as an enduringly endearing manner, swift on his feet, quick with his tongue.

Vocally, Floyd has given Nolen the best of his score, which begins to take hold and to build when Stark is given the first in a series of ariettas, or monologues: "Once upon a time on a cold winter night." This is the key to a point of view, a statement of being, a deep identification with others who are disadvantaged. Eventually it casts a net over a much younger, socially superior blonde beauty, who breaks off her engagement to a man of her own class to marry the tough reprobate and, literally, triggers his assassination.



Timothy Nolen's impersonation of Willie Stark is a work of art.

Here, to be sure, is nothing like the dreams and dilemmas of other operatic romances such as those in Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème* or even *Tosca*. This composition springs instead from a hefty piece of Americana that will either succeed or fail by its manner of recreation. Floyd has striven to spike his work purposefully with declamation, with plain-talk in sometimes Southern-slurred accents, between biting specialties sung by members of Willie's "team" and those who block their way. But for those who listen carefully, in the dry soil Floyd has chosen to till, there are thematic seeds that flower and burst into bloom in later episodes. Prominent among them is the rising "Come back, Willie, come back home," which brings Act I to a resounding conclusion, especially under the deft musical direction of John De Main.

From a start with the timeless voice of Lowell Thomas (taped) coming from antiquated radios like an electronic Greek chorus, Harold Prince's gifts—for galvanizing the Broadway stage in such musicals as *Cabaret*, *Pacific Overtures*, and the recent *Evita*, and for humanizing such opera-related matters as Josef Tal's *Ashmedai* and Kurt Weill's *Silverlake* for the New York City Opera—provide Floyd with

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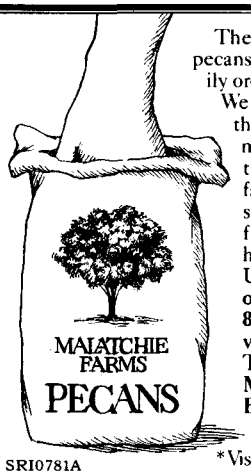

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MUSIC

a highly resourceful, often winning directorial hand on which to stake his gamble.

Prince has a transcendent aptitude for making stage action a credible part of a place and a period. When the place is a Southern state and the period is the Depression Thirties, all the visual data that can be assembled are of indispensable value. Sometimes, however, his love for spectacle—for face cards to strengthen a winning hand—unbalances the operatic equation for which such a composer as Floyd strives.

Nolen is a princely example of the right voice in the right body, as are Don Garrard as Judge Burden, whom Stark destroys to save his own career; David Vosburgh as the tight-lipped Lieutenant-Governor Duffy, always ready to serve his boss no matter how dirtily; Robert Moulson as the massive bodyguard Sugar Boy; and Jan Curtis as the perennial female member of Stark's team. But both Julia Conwell, as Anne Stanton, and Alan Kays, as the socialite she gives up in order to marry Stark, look better than they sound.

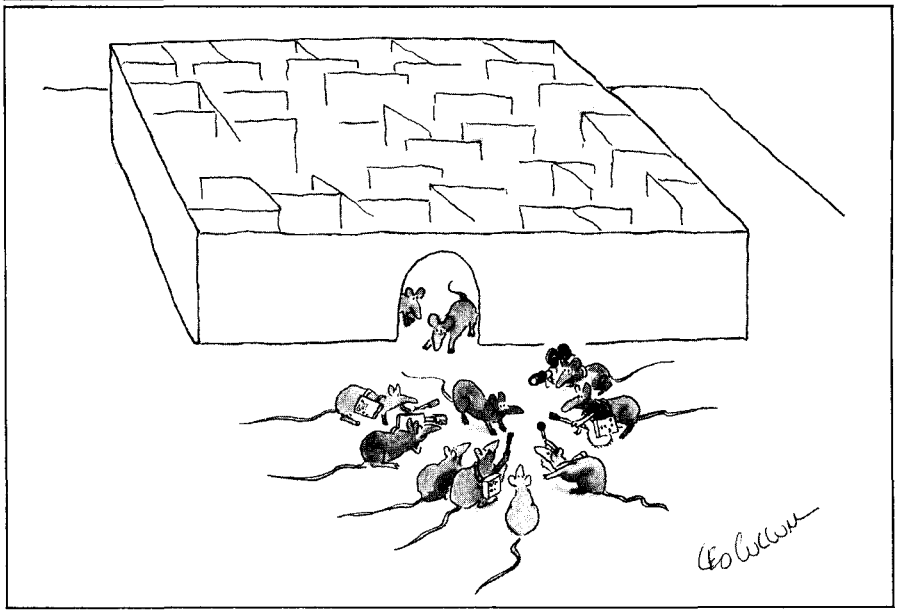
Eugene Lee's scenic background (a straightforward unit set) is far too economical to do anything but impoverish the visual credibility of the action. Even 40 choristers appear sparse as a "crowd" on its barren steps, and other acting is too bereft of props to convey reality.

But the proof of the pudding is not the dish in which it is served but the ingredients of which it is made. In his own libretto adapted from Warren's long novel, Floyd derived a reasonable skeleton for musical purposes. But in the decade he spent bringing the work to maturity, Floyd never came to grips with the best way to flesh it out.

Did he mean the work to be heard by a reasonably alert musical audience—or did he settle for an appeal to those just out for a night on the town? One old friend of the latter category whom I encountered at the Kennedy Center opening asked, "Is there a law against contemporary composers writing melody for a stage work?" Thinking of the many, if somewhat disguised, melodies in Floyd's score, I replied, "Sometimes you have to know where to listen for it. The melody could be in the double bass."

But if Floyd wasn't seeking a widely popular audience for *Willie Stark*, why did he score his "musical drama" (as he calls it) for an orchestra of only 35 musicians—the capacity of a Broadway theater's pit? An orchestra of this size produces a sometimes skimpy sound.

Could *Willie Stark* be reworked on a larger scale, fleshed out for proper musical consideration on behalf of its many good ideas and so fine a performer as Timothy Nolen? To ask so much of a composer is no small matter. But neither is trying to make a worthwhile artistic work for the musical stage out of Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men.* ■



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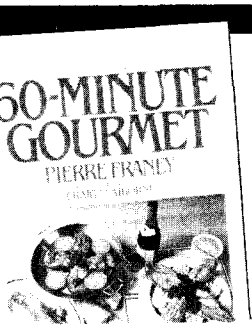

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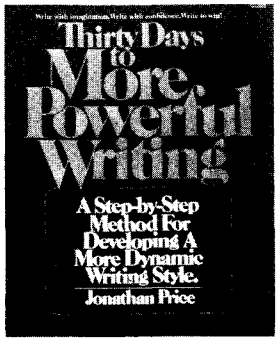

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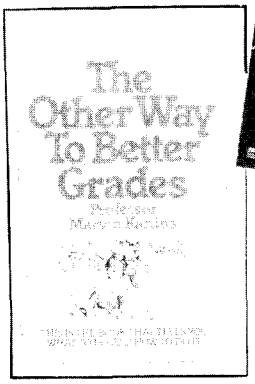

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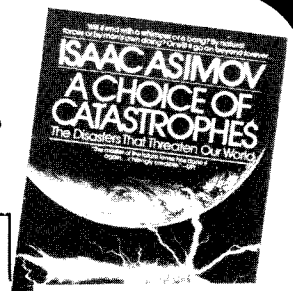

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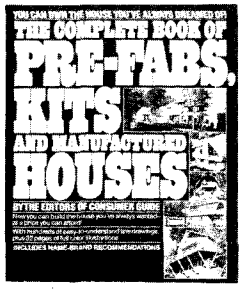

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SR Competition No. 22

Ask me no questions, Alitalia no lies.
Esquimo questions, Aleutian no lies.
Paranomasia, I'll tell Old Blue Eyes.

Get the point? Puns on catch-phrases, proverbs, titles, slogans—any recognizable segment of current English. An example from the master, James Joyce: "Be he never so nimble, there's no police like Holmes." Make the punning phrases as funny and as elaborate as is consonant with a becoming brevity. Twenty-five dollars each to the three winners.

Entries for Competition No. 22 must be received by August 7 and the winners will be announced in the October issue. Send submissions to *SR* Competition No. 22, *Saturday Review*, 150 East 58 Street, New York, New York 10155. All entries become the property of *SR*.

Winners of No. 19

This magazine must have the most mysterious readers in existence. For reasons that we cannot fathom, the *prize* offered for Competition 19 ($25 plus a copy of Somerset Maugham's *The Rains Came*) elicited a greater response than the actual contest! Some of the comments were puzzling to the point of complete opacity. Here, for instance, is the entire text of a letter from Harry Probst of Baltimore, Maryland:

> Gentlemen:
> Somerset Maugham's *The Rains Came*? Is that the one about how Louis Bromfield seduced that unfortunate Thompson girl?

Since it attracted so much attention, let us dispose of this matter before turning to the contest. Maugham's novel *The Rains Came* has unaccountably been allowed to go out of print, but our assistant, Sadie T., is still scouring the used-book stores and when last heard from had reached Bombay. If her quest should fail, we shall change the prize to $25 (about which no one chose to be funny, we noticed) and a copy of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Malabar Faun*.

Some readers, we are relieved to report, wanted to *win* Maugham's novel, not make jokes about it, and therefore entered the contest, which called for inventive ways of solving the East Coast's water shortage.

First prize goes to Joanna Mason, of Esperance, New York, whose breath-takingly simple plan solves more problems than even she appears to realize:

> We can *make* water from those thousands of barrels of oil we import from the Middle East each day. For instance, if we combine 4.5 molecules of ordinary oxygen (O_2) with only one molecule octane (C_8H_{18}), we can create *nine* molecules of H_20 . . . *And*, as an added bonus, we will have left eight whole atoms of pure carbon—to be turned into diamonds or coal, whichever is in greater demand at the moment.

Second prize to John T. Reutershan, of the Bronx, New York, whose solution is concealed, we think, in the following attractive story:

> Eau Reservoir
> I awoke, throat horribly parched. The dehumidifier had extracted precipus quarts from the air. The time lock had not released the shower; I could perform only minor ablutions. For these a single watermelon sufficed. The residue would sustain the angelfish. I boiled milk for coffee and strapped on my dowsing rod. It was late so I checked the gas tank for water and sped to work.... I had been fired for lateness. I restrained my tears until I could collect them; then wandered outside, mouth open, hands cupped. I entered a diner. "Ice water," I whispered. "Make it a double."

We should like to award honorable mention to all those people who did not prattle on about "Louis Bromfield." Fortunately, space is limited. Therefore we lift our dunce cap in salute to the wonderfully laconic Mrs. Grace B. Wilson, of Farmington, New Mexico, whose entire contribution reads: "Our West is plentiful with rocks. Send for Moses to come and strike one."

And to Mrs. W.D. Williams of Vernon, Texas, for the following:

> When daylight saving time was introduced, an Alabama farmer complained that the extra hour of sunshine dried up his tomato crop; and during a dry spell in Texas a rancher reported that by the time city water reached his place it contained only 20 percent moisture. So turn the clock *back* to reduce evaporation and then lower the moisture content to stretch the available water.

Puzzles

Literary Crypt No. 167

Y ZYP FOR OYG PRU XAAP SP SUYEV, SG YEFYVG IRP-GISRMG RQ YP SPQAT-SRTSUV.

GYZMAE DROPGRP

Wit Twister No. 179

Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash with a blank corresponds to a letter of a word.

Have you _____ your thoughts on this machine,

Whose name _____ from yours: "La Guillotine"?

She's saved her old _____ till the last.

Your head will crown today's _____ _____ repast!

A.S.

Answers next month

June Answers

Solution to Literary Crypt No. 166

The fickleness of the women I love is only equalled by the infernal constancy of the women who love me.
Bernard Shaw

Solution to Wit Twister No. 178

rarest, Arrest, Sartre

Middleton Double-Crostic No. 208

(M.F.K.) Fisher: As the Lingo Languishes

It becomes a real embarrassment. . . when a friend or a responsible critic of cookbooks or restaurants uses words like *yummy*, or *scrumptious*. There is no dignity in such infantile evasions of plain words like *good*—or even *delicious* or *excellent*.

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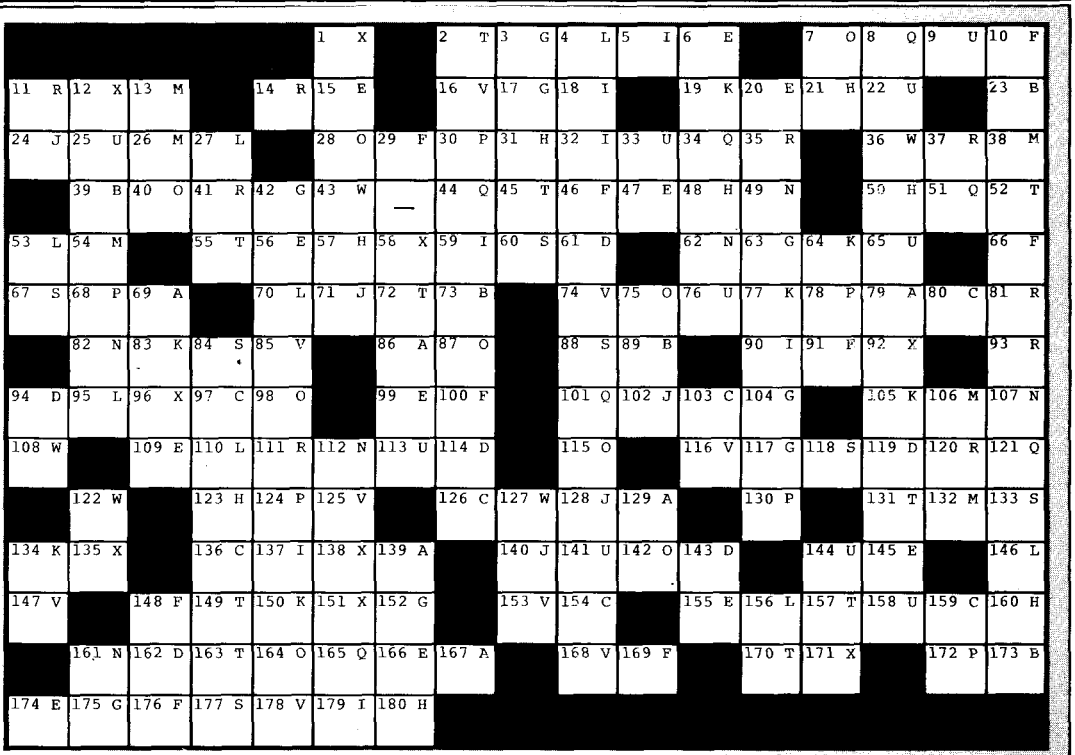
Instructions:
If you've never solved one of these puzzles, it will probably look much more difficult than it actually is. If you can answer only a few of the WORDS correctly, you're on your way to solving the puzzle. Fill in the numbered blanks of all the WORDS you can guess and write the letter of each numbered blank in its correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. The letters printed in the upper-right-hand corners of the squares indicate from what WORD a particular square's letter comes.
The diagram, when filled in, should read as a quotation from a published work. The dark squares are the spaces between words. If there is no dark square at the end of a line, a word may carry over to the line below.
The first letter of each WORD, reading down, will spell the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.
You should find yourself seeing words and phrases taking form in the diagram; so you can work back and forth, from WORDS to diagram and from diagram to WORDS, until the diagram is filled in.



Middleton Double-Crostic No. 209

CLUES	WORDS
A. Uttered inarticulately or pitifully	69 79 86 129 139 167
B. Type of poplar	173 23 39 73 89
C. Tender, compassionate	97 103 126 136 154 80 159
D. Land of plenty and comfort	61 94 114 119 143 162
E. Turning away from the source of light	166 47 91 99 145 56 174 6 15 155 20 109
F. The worthless or disreputable element of society	10 29 66 148 176 46 169 100
G. Philosophical work by Kierkegaard (2 wds.)	104 117 152 175 3 17 63 42
H. "He nursed the pinion which impell'd —" (2 wds.; Byron, "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers")	50 123 160 180 21 31 48 57
I. Pleasantness	137 179 5 32 59 90 18
J. Stale; fatigued	24 71 102 128 140
K. Gracefully slender and supple	19 77 105 134 150 64 83
L. General survey	110 4 27 53 95 146 156 70
M. Scads, heaps	106 132 13 26 38 54
N. Partition	62 112 107 161 49 82
O. Healthy vigor, strength	7 75 98 164 115 142 40 28 87
P. Old name for Britain	124 30 172 130 68 78
Q. Cancels; eradicates	121 165 34 51 101 8 44
R. Viers for the America's cup	35 41 93 37 14 81 111 120 11
S. Heavy, irksome	177 60 84 67 88 133 118
T. English novelist (1689-1761; "Pamela")	149 170 131 45 52 55 72 163 157 2
U. Son of Deucalion and Pyrrha; first man to mix water with wine	9 76 158 22 144 113 33 25 141 65
V. Becomes less ardent (2 wds.)	16 153 168 74 85 125 178 116 147
W. Supple, pliant	43 122 36 127 108
X. Animated, vivified	96 151 58 1 138 12 171 92 135

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SR RECOMMENDS

Books

Fiction

The Issa Valley, by Czeslaw Milosz, translated by Louis Iribarne (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 296 pp., $13.95). Set in a Lithuanian river valley centuries ago, this novel is a tender, insightful, and often painful evocation of that strange journey from early childhood to adolescence. Written by the exiled Polish author, who received this year's Nobel Prize for Literature.

July's People, by Nadine Gordimer (The Viking Press, 192 pp., $10.95). Addressing the fears of white South Africans—destruction of property, disintegration of society, black revolution—Gordimer has written a powerful and compelling parable.

Balancing Acts, by Lynne Sharon Schwartz (Harper & Row, 224 pp., $9.95). Likable narrative about the relationship between an elderly acrobat and a teenaged girl. One character learns to relinquish life, the other learns to accept it. The central metaphor is a bit strained, but Schwartz compensates by populating her tale with engaging characters.

Nonfiction

Lost in America, by Isaac Bashevis Singer, translated by Joseph Singer (Doubleday, 256 pp., $17.95). This third volume of what the author calls "the autobiography I never intend to write" finds the young writer shipbound for New York in 1935. The language is conversational yet lyrical, and the cumulative effect magical.

Mornings on Horseback, by David McCullough (Simon & Schuster, 384 pp., $17.95). The historian of *The Path Between the Seas* examines the first 27 years in the privileged life of our 26th President. McCullough argues convincingly that Teddy Roosevelt's fascination with the "Wild West" derived from its similarities to the Old South described by his mother. A biography full of odd, novel details.

National Defense, by James Fallows (Random House, 206 pp., $12.95). This consideration of our defense policy contends that corporate mentality has led to tactics based on oversimplified, abstract models. Fallows, a journalist and, briefly, a speechwriter for President Carter, touches all the bases and weapons. His is a valuable and refreshing perspective.

Played Out: The Jean Seberg Story, by David Richards (Random House, 371 pp., $13.95). This actress's life reads like a cruel Cinderella story. At 17 she was an international star, at 27 a political activist, at 34 a suicide. Richards writes with sympathy, but he doesn't distort or dilute the sad facts of the case.

Will's Boy, by Wright Morris (Harper & Row, 208 pp., $10.95). A spare, stinging memoir about growing up goofy in the Midwest during the Boring Teens and Roaring Twenties of this century. By the author of last year's prize-winning novel, *Plains Song*.

Film

The Four Seasons. Director, screenwriter, and star Alan Alda explores the "seasons" of friendship by examining the shifting relationships among three couples who regularly vacation together (played by Alda, Carol Burnett, Jack Weston, Rita Moreno, Len Cariou, and Sandy Dennis). The film is ingratiating, if less than exhilarating.

Superman II. That rare sequel which improves on the original, this superspectacular entertainment brings back the same cast but provides a trio of terrific outer-space villains and more dazzling special effects to go with the wit, style, and pop-culture nostalgia that makes for inter-generational fun.

SR's Phoenix Code

- Outstanding
- Excellent
- Good
- Notable

Gaijin: Roads to Freedom. Tizuka Yamasaki's romantic adventure story of Japanese laborers at the turn of the century who emigrated to Brazil's coffee plantations. Despite its exotic characters and setting, the film becomes the universal story of strangers in a strange land, fighting against exploitation to make a life of their own.

Moscow Doesn't Believe in Tears. This Soviet movie mysteriously won an Oscar as the Best Foreign Language film of 1980. It's the kind of through-the-years schmaltz about three roommates growing into womanhood that Hollywood stopped making 20 years ago. Still, its innocent characters, intelligently portrayed, are hard to resist.

Outland. For lovers of outer-space hardware and/or Sean Connery, Peter Hyams's *High Noon*-ish story of a righteous federal marshal fighting the bad guys in a mining community on the third moon of Jupiter overcomes its simplistic story with razzle-dazzle sets, continuous action, and a lovely performance by Frances Sternhagen to complement Connery's.

Theater

Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music (Nederlander Theater, New York City). When Horne stops singing, her stage personality—bitter superstar who, deep down, is just a funky farm girl—can grate. But fortunately, she devotes nearly all the evening to song, and when she grabs hold of a tune, she stretches its rhythmic and emotional boundaries to stunning breadth.

The Pirates of Penzance (Uris Theater, New York City). Director Wilford Leach and music director William Elliott set an overall tone of intelligence and charm. This *Pirates* has been put together by contemporary Americans who love and respect the work but who will not try to mimic Victorian Englishmen or their descendants.

42nd Street (Majestic Theater, New York City). "Hear the beat/of dancing feet," says the title song, and never did a lyric fix a show's essence

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more neatly. Choreographed by the late Gower Champion on Thirties models, the brisk tappings carry us along on a pleasant tide of nostalgia. The show is just chunks of agreeable stuff that makes us feel things were better back then, but what more does one want from a Broadway musical?

Sophisticated Ladies (Lunt-Fontanne Theater, New York City). The music of Duke Ellington, togged up with lots of glitz, lots of Cotton Club atmosphere. The show is not complicated—36 numbers in front of a band—and the high-pitched, unrelieved energy eventually becomes wearing. But some of the performers are excellent.

Records

Bartók: Works for Piano (Philips 9500 876, $9.98). The young Hungarian pianist Zoltan Kocsis evokes Béla Bartok's strong spirit with his clear articulation, passionate accents, and frank, slightly percussive tone. He has clearly studied Bartók's own recorded performances. He handles the *Sketches*, the *Four Dirges*, and the frantic *Allegro Barbaro* well, but most moving are the brilliantly harmonized settings of Hungarian folk songs, full of anguish and pride, meltingly played.

Schumann: Works for Oboe and Piano (Philips 9500 740, $9.98). The Romantic era didn't yield much music for solo oboe, an instrument favored by composers of the baroque and classical periods. Heinz Holliger, perhaps the most accomplished oboist of our day, calls Schumann's three Romances, Opus 94, the most important oboe works of the time. He plays them—and eight other pieces—with a tantalizing combination of restraint and yearning. In pianist Alfred Brendel he has the ideal partner.

Mendelssohn and Bruch: Violin Concertos (Deutsche Grammophon 2531 304, $9.98). Schlomo Mintz, 24, makes his recording debut playing a 1752 Guadagnini magnificently, pairing the Mendelssohn E-minor with Bruch's first. The Chicago Symphony, under Claudio Abbado, provides vigorous accompaniment. Mintz's style is patrician, his tone full.

English Songs (2-Peters International, PLE 136/7 $15.96). Tenor Ian Partridge, sweet-voiced and sensitive, sings words by Shakespeare, Yeats, Whitman, and someone called Fredegond Shove, among others, set to music by Peter Warlock, Frederick Delius, Ivor Gurney, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. The emotional range is wide, the composers' personalities quite distinct. The tenor is accompanied by his wife, Jennifer Partridge.

The Mannheim School: Music of the Early Classical Period (3-Archiv 2723 068, $29.94). This attractive set explains what happened between Pergolesi and Haydn. The phalanx of progressive musicians who worked in Mannheim during the 18th century included Christian Cannabich, Ignaz Holzbauer, Johann Stamitz. In these recordings, violinist Thomas Füri leads the Camerata Bern in a variety of symphonies and concertos by six Mannheim composers; the playing is lively, especially when flutist Aurèle Nicolet, oboist Heinz Holliger, and Füri are playing solos.

Dance

The Royal Ballet. The internationally famous British troupe, celebrating its 50th anniversary with a U.S. tour, follows its New York season with engagements at Washington's Kennedy Center (July 14 through 26) and Boston's Metropolitan Center (July 28 through August 2).

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (Ted Shawn Theater, nine miles east of Lee, Massachusetts). The summer-long festival, with origins dating back 49 years, continues into July with the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company (June 30 through July 4); Joffrey II Dancers (July 7 through 11); Dance Plus, with Charles Moulton Dance Co., Manual Alum, Bill Irwin, Ellen Kogan (July 14 through 18); and the Boston Ballet (July 21 through 25).

Pepsico Summerfare (State University of New York at Purchase). Joffrey Ballet, July 11, 12; Bella Lewitzky Dance Company, July 17, 18, 19; two world premieres: Kathryn Posin's *The Ballroom* and John Butler's *Facets of Desire* (with Martine van Hamel, Keven McKenzie), July 24, 25, 26; from England, The Moving Picture Mime Show, July 25, 26.

Art

Kandinsky: Watercolors (The Cleveland Museum of Art). This selection of 50 watercolors ranges in date from 1911 to 1940, and traces the development of a major innovator in the history of 20th-century painting. (Through September 27.)

Speaking a New Classicism: American Architecture Now (The Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts). Drawings by 24 contemporary architects give evidence that the pre-modern past is being taken very seriously these days. Among the architects included are Robert Venturi, Robert A.M. Stern, and Michael Graves. (Through September 8.)

Andrea Palladio (The Art Institute of Chicago). More than 100 drawings by the Italian Renaissance architect who did more than any other to influence the look of American schools, mansions, and banks. (Through August 31.)

Kenneth Snelson (Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York). A retrospective covering 20 years of work by this major American sculptor. The feature attractions are Snelson's large, seemingly gravity-free constructions of cable and metal tubing. (Through August 9.)

Kandinsky: The Improvisations (The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.). Paintings, drawings, watercolors, and prints from the *Improvisation* series (1909-1914), with which Kandinsky made the leap from representational to abstract art. (Through August 2.)

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